

**U.S. Transmitters**

- \*746. **Shri P. C. Borooah:**  
**Shri P. R. Chakraverti:**  
**Shri Vishwa Nath Pandey:**  
**Shri Buta Singh:**  
**Shri Narasimha Reddy:**  
**Shri Sidheshwar Prasad:**  
**Shri Vasudevan Nair:**  
**Shrimati Jyotsna Chanda:**  
**Shri Kapur Singh:**

Will the Minister of **Information and Broadcasting** be pleased to state:

(a) whether a team of U.S. engineers visited Delhi in June, 1966 to discuss the question of installation of a U. S. transmitter in every district in India; and

(b) if so, the result of the discussion?

**The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Shri Raj Bahadur) :** (a) and (b). In April last year, the U.S. Ambassador wrote a letter to Minister of Information and Broadcasting to say that it might be useful if India could establish a network of local rural-oriented radio stations, one in each of 320 districts. Each station was proposed to have a small staff of programme personnel capable of producing radio programmes in the local language suited to meet the requirements of the town and villages within the district.

Subsequently, in May last year, the Ambassador offered to bring over two Consultants, later increased to four, to undertake a feasibility study to determine the necessary number of transmitters, their cost, the likely cost of receivers and other specifications of broadcasting system. The Consultants were also to examine requirements of training of necessary personnel and provision and manufacture of equipment and machinery for the stations.

Broadcasting as a communication media has enormous powers and is particularly suited for a country like India with remote

villages for bringing about social, economic and technological changes in the country. The possibility of having regional broadcasting stations to cater to the different agricultural zones by some foreseeable date in the future was considered attractive. Such a network, it was felt, would strengthen our sense of national unity and provide new means of mass education and literacy drives, create new incentives to greater production, a desire for modern technology and even convey the essentials of that technology. It was, therefore, agreed to have the feasibility team.

The various technical implications of the U.S. Ambassador's suggestion were consequently examined by this Ministry and some difficulties in implementing were envisaged both for reasons of high cost and lack of frequencies, as we operate on A.M. frequency and the concept of one Radio Station for each district implied the F.M. system which will need additional investments which we cannot afford. The matter was subsequently discussed in October last year with the Planning Commission and it was decided that it will be both uneconomic and unfeasible to have transmitting stations in each district. The Planning Commission favoured a much smaller number of efficient transmitting stations but the rapid expansion of listening facilities.

Also in October last year, following a FAO Regional Seminar on Agricultural Education and Training in Bangkok, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture made a request for assistance from the U.N. Special Fund for a broadcasting programme. In accordance with this FAO-UNESCO recommendation for request to the U.N. Special Fund, there would be a total of 66 Farm and Home Radio Transmission Units in the course of the Fourth Five Year Plan. Of these 10 have already started working from June 7, 1966 and 6 more will start shortly. The remaining 50 units will be completed in the Fourth Plan period if the recommendations of the

FAO-UNESCO Team are accepted by Planning Commission and a request to UN Special Fund for assistance is made and entertained.

We indicated the aforesaid difficulties and position and the intended visit of the proposed study team was consequently cancelled.

#### **Money of Indian Merchants frozen in Burma**

\*747. **Shri Mohammed Koya:** Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Burma have frozen the money of the Indian merchants in Burma;

(b) whether this includes capital taken from India;

(c) whether the Burmese Government have been approached to give back our merchants' money; and

(d) if so, their reaction thereon?

**The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Dinesh Singh):** (a) When the Burmese Government nationalised some categories of commercial establishments in the country, the bank accounts of Indian merchants in the name of their shops as on the day of nationalisation were frozen.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir, this is under discussion with the Government of Burma as part of the whole question of compensation for Indian assets in Burma.

#### **Indian Children visiting East Berlin**

3548. **Shri Ram Harkh Yadav:** Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether four children from India will visit East Berlin on a cultural programme;

(b) if so, the details of the children and their cultural programme; and

(c) the expenses involved in the scheme?

**The Minister of External Affairs (Shri Swaran Singh):** (a) On an invitation from the Pioneers' Organisation of the G.D.R., a delegation of four children (between the ages of 12 and 14) and one leader each from the International Cultural Forum and the Pioneers visited the G.D.R. to attend an international pioneers' camp from 12th July to 17th August.

(b) The names and addresses of the children and their leaders are given in the list laid on the table of the House. [*Placed in Library See No. 6947/66*]. The Children and their leaders attended the international pioneers' camp (summer vacation camp) in the G.D.R. for 35 days along with the children from several other countries.

(c) All expenses including board and lodging in the G.D.R. were borne by the host organisation. In case of the International Cultural Forum, travel expenses both ways were borne by the delegates themselves, but in case of the Pioneers the return passage (one way) was borne by the host organisation. No expenditure of any kind was borne by the Government of India on these delegations.

#### **"Today in Parliament" Programme of A.I.R.**

3549. **Shri Kishen Pattmayak:  
Shri Ram Sewak Yadav:  
Snri Madhu Limaye:**

Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the All India Radio had decided that hereafter Parliamentary Correspondents should cover the proceedings by turns in AIR Programmes "Today in Parliament";

(b) whether it is fact that the first day's proceedings (in the current session) were to be reported on by Mr. Shivaram of *Indian Express*;

(c) whether it is also a fact that he personally ordered some portion from this Reporter's script deleted because they showed an independent outlook;