

15.12 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE : CONVERSION  
OF AIR AND DOORDARSHAN INTO  
AUTONOMOUS CORPORATIONS—  
CONTD.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, we take further discussion on the Resolution regarding conversion of AIR and Doordarshan into autonomous corporations, moved by Shri M. Raghuma Reddy on 19th April, 1985.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balsore): While the hon. Member is intending to make AIR and Doordarshan as autonomous bodies, I think, his intentions of making it impartial cannot be implemented if both these organisations are made autonomous bodies because they cannot leave behind the political bias, about which I had told you the other day. If we see other autonomous bodies which are functioning in our country, what we have noticed is that they are not functioning well. For example, LIC, Food Corporation of India, State Electricity Boards, are they functioning well? Not at all. They are in a mess. So, we should not make the mass media which is the channel through which we are educating the masses and putting forward the Government's programmes and policies for the welfare of the people, as autonomous as we do not want these organisations to be in a mess like other autonomous bodies of our country.

The hon. Member, Mr. Reddy and some other hon. Members who have supported this Resolution have cited the instance of BBC. But we all have bitter experience of BBC. Due to the functioning of the BBC, the UK Government had been put in a very embarrassing situation in the past. The friendly countries and the Commonwealth countries became critic of the UK Government for which the UK Government had to apologise before those Governments several in the past. So, we should not cite BBC as an example.

While speaking on the AIR, I strongly oppose the suggestion to make it an autonomous body. I do not know why the hon. Member, Mr. Reddy, has the intention to make it an autonomous body. We had seen in the past, when our late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi was alive that whenever AIR used to announce something about her speeches or about her activities, etc. some critics, some opposition Members of our country—I do not want to name them—had started commenting that this was not All India Radio but All Indira Radio. When the Prime Minister of a country speaks, he or she must announce the Government policies and must announce the welfare policies of the Government which are useful and beneficial to the masses. Will these not be broadcast through All India Radio or Doordarshan? So, whenever her speeches were broadcast, many people used to say that this is All Indira Radio. If the intention is to bring these two organisations into controversy, if the intention is to make them political institutions and if with that intention this Resolution has been brought, then I have nothing to say. But the people and the hon. Members in the House cannot support this Resolution wholeheartedly because this will definitely bring these two organisations into a mess and this will not serve the purpose at all.

While speaking about the functioning of the Ministry and also of these two media, I must congratulate the Ministry that they are doing the best for the benefit of the people. In the Sixth Plan they had targeted to cover over 70 Per cent of the population of the country under Doordarshan programmes, but due to constraint of resources, it could not be done. If we make it an autonomous body, can we achieve the desired results? We cannot, because due to constraint of resources when the Government itself is not able to achieve the target, how can the corporation under this Government, achieve the desired results? So, I must request the hon. Minister that his Ministry should give due attention to the backward areas, specially the tribal areas to cover those areas under Doordarshan and All

India Radio. While speaking about the backward States like Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, North-Eastern region, etc., I must say that even though the Ministry is trying to give more coverage of these areas, but the desired results could not be achieved, especially in the case of Orissa. The Orissa Government had requested for having six or seven more Low Power T.V. Transmission Centres, but due to constraint of resources, the Ministry has expressed its inability to do so. I would request the hon. Minister to look into it. Specially, I will request the hon. Minister the Barpada, the headquarters of Mayurbhanj district, having a tribal population of 80 per cent, must have a T.V. Centre. About Balasore also, which is my parliamentary constituency, I have written so many times to the hon. Minister. Balasore is a well known flood prone, cyclone-prone and tornado-prone area. When the hon. Minister was holding the portfolio of Communications Ministry, he must have seen that no underground cables for telephone and telegraph lines, could be laid either in Baripada or in Balasore areas. So, in the event of a calamity, they are definitely lagging behind in getting the information. In both the districts and the tribal population is also much more. So for the education and for the benefit of the tribal masses and also for the poorest of the poor of the society, which is the ideology of this Government, I must urge upon the hon. Minister to look into it so that in the first year of the Seventh Five-Year Plan Balasore and Paripoda are provided with two low power TV centres. During the Sixth Plan there was a programme for providing thirteen high-power transmission centres in the country. Out of these thirteen, for Orissa only one 10 kilowatt power transmission centre was to be installed in Cuttack. But even that has not been installed even after the completion of the Sixth Plan. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to look into it so that at least in the first year of the Seventh Five Year i.e. the current year, a high-powered 10 Kw transmission Centre at Cuttack is installed.

In addition to that I would request the hon. Minister that whatever the Plan

and programme that could be there, our national coverage for 80% of the population in the Seventh Plan should be achieved for all the States. I am not asking for my State or any other State alone: It must be achieved during the Seventh Plan in the case of all the State including the North Eastern States.

With these words I oppose this resolution.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Mahbubnagar): This in my view, is a very innocuous and non-controversial Resolution. I do not know why one ruling party Member after another is opposing the content and substance of this Motion.

The Charter of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation begins with the famous words :

"The air belongs to all of us."

We would never forget that, but the air in our country i.e. the All India Radio and Doordarshan belong to the ruling party, the running clique and the ruling family.

This idea about All India Radio and Television being converted into an autonomous organisation has been accepted as a national goal from the very beginning. Way back in 1948, the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, speaking in the Constituent Assembly said :

"My own view of the set up for broadcasting is that we should approximate as far as possible to the British model—BBC."

I do not know why the ruling party is allergic to the word BBC. Many Committees have gone into this subject. The Chanda Committee as far back as 1964 recommended the formation of an independent autonomous corporation for manning All India Radio.

I may refer to the Verghese Committee which was appointed during the Janata regime on a certain experience we have had with the All India Radio

and Doordarshan during the dark days of Emergency which lasted as many as 18 months, Sir, the Verghese Committee in its comprehensive Report pleased for the formation of an autonomous corporation and also defined sharply the contours of autonomy that All India Radio and Doordarshan in the country should enjoy.

Sir, should I also refer to the Joshi Committee which was appointed by this Government? The Joshi Committee also recommended the formation of an autonomous corporation on the lines of Ombudsman and BBC. The Joshi Committee deplored the growing political influence in All India Radio and Doordarshan. The Joshi Committee referred to the manner in which the news prepared is imperfect, almost self-censored because All India Radio and Doordarshan draw upon the pool of All India Radio. The news the censored right at the source.

Should I also not refer to the Parthasarathy Committee Report? The Committee was headed by no other person than Mr. G. Parthasarathy who is also heading the Foreign Affairs Committee now. The Parthasarathy Committee Report confirmed the fact of political interference with these two organisations. The Parthasarathy Committee itself pointed out that the News Editor was pulled up for reading a news bulletin about the Judgment of Justice Lentin of Bombay High Court against the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr. A. R. Antulay. It also referred to the manner in which Doordarshan was instructed to include in the news bulletin a statement of the Working President of the Ruling Party, Mr. Kamalpathi Tripathi on the issue of alleged adulteration of vanaspati with animal tallow.

Sir, the News Wing of Bombay Doordarshan was instructed not to cover the padayatra of Mr. Chandrasekhar, President of Janata Party while he was passing through Maharashtra, whereas the Bombay Doordarshan had covered a taken padayatra undertaken in the

Bombay city by the then General Secretary of AICC (I), Mr. Rajiv Gandhi.

Sir, I may' in this connection, recall to you what happened in Andhra Pradesh. Mr. N. T. Rama Rao, on completion of one year in office, went to the people over the Radio to explain to the people as to what he had done. At that time the All India Radio was obliged, rather went out of the its way, to approach the then Opposition leader in the Assembly, Mr. Madam Mohan, to reply to what the Chief Minister had to say. But when Mrs. Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister of India wanted to explain to the people of India over the All India Radio and Doordarshan after completion of her four years' regime during the second reign, no Opposition leader was given an identical opportunity. I may also recall how the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh was once refused permission to speak over the All India Radio in connection with NGOs' strike.

I have quoted some of these instances only to show how All India Radio and Doordarshan have become pliable tools, captive instrumentalities of the ruling party. The more ruling party . . .

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Robertsgang): Include Janata Party also. That was Advani Party at that time and Shri Chandrasekhar and you were there.

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY: According to Shri Panika, it is pliable. Do you admit it was pliable to the Janata or was it pliable to the ruling party? You are making out a case for making it an autonomous body.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: As Mr. Ayyapu Reddy has rightly pointed out with his vast experience of the law on the criminal side, then they have only strengthened the case, even if the allegation that the Janata Party misused the All India Radio or Doordarshan for its own purposes is correct. It only strengthens the plea behind the resolution.

I would like to ask the hon. Minister for information and Broadcasting to tell us as to the quantum of time which was given to Shri Rajiv Gandhi when he was nothing more than one of the six General Secretaries of AICC (I) on Doordarshan and All India Radio during 1982-83.

All India Radio and Doordarshan were used blatantly and nakedly, for projecting and perpetuating the dynastic rule of this country.

I think Mr. Rajiv Gandhi should not thank the ruling party but the All India Radio Doordarshan for the great success he had at the polls.

I may quote another classic instance to show the low credibility of All India Radio. Everybody knows that Mrs. Gandhi as Prime Minister of India breathed her last within one or two hours of that incident. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi who was away in West Bengal did not know what really had happened in New Delhi. So, he did not listen to All India Radio. He tuned into BBC, the accursed BBC! Can there be a more telling commentary on the kind of loss of credibility that these Organisations, the All India Radio and Doordarshan have suffered during the last so many years! And if this is not the reason why you should agree for an Organisation, I do not know what exactly would impel or compel this Government to agree to this idea.

Nothing in the last so many years has registered such phenomenal growth in our country as television. I am one of those who welcome this growth. But this TV network has not been given this high priority, this pride of place, for educating the masses or getting the high tech across to masses but to propagate the message of the ruling party.

I may, in this connection, also refer to the manner in which the fake Congress—I Centenary was given the benefit of live telecast. (*Interruption*) Yes. I call it a fake Congress-I. That is my view. I am entitled to my view. The Congress I Party does not re-

resent that Congress Party. (*Interruptions*) This shows how All India Radio and Doordarshan are being misused not only for political misappropriation but for distortion of history.

The very fact that Congress-I Centenary was made to start on the birthday of Motilal Nehru shows what was the design, what was the purpose, during the whole programme of Centenary celebrations.

SHRI A. CHARLES (Trivandrum): This is only West Bengal culture.

SHRI JAIPAL REDDY: He does not know that I am from Janata Party and from Andhra Pradesh. He is mistaking me for a CPM Member from West Bengal.

PROF P. J. KURIEN (Idukki): We are surprised that you are saying this being in the Janata Party. It would have been understandable if you were CPM or any other Party like the Telugu Desam. How can you speak like that?

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: That was a democratic Party. But yours is a dynastic Party. (*Interruptions*) The Prime Minister, whose speech was telecast live during the Centenary, has said, 'I am proud of belonging to that family which produced Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi,' and so on and so forth. . . (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order. Mr. Reddy, Please wind up.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I cannot hear anything. Nothing will go on record because of the confusion that is going on. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I will go through the record. Mr. Reddy, please wind up.

**SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY :** Now that the ruling Party Members do not allow me to speak, I am compelled to conclude.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** Your time is over.

**SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY :** I would like to refer to the manner in which the news is collected by these institutions. As I have said earlier, in All India Radio and Doordarshan there is a news pool where the news is censored first. Secondly, they depend exclusively for remaining things on PTI and UNI which are reliable news agencies. I appreciate that. But there is also need for All India Radio and Doordarshan to draw upon the assistance of a number of language news agencies like Samachar Bharati, Hindustan Samachar, and so on and so forth.

With these few words, I can only say that the kind of resistance that is put up by the ruling Party is another clinching proof of the validity of the plea for autonomy of All India Radio and Doordarshan.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI HAFIZ MOHD. SIDDIQ** (Morabad) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for allowing me to speak on this Bill. I fail to understand the need and the reason for moving in this House the resolution regarding conversion of A.I.R. and Doordarshan into Autonomous Corporations. Ours is an independent country where AIR and Doordarshan have never been used as a propaganda medium by the Congress Party, as has been alleged by the Opposition.

The Opposition alleges that these bodies are the propaganda medium of the Congress Party, but it is not so. You might remember the role they used to play during the the Janata regime.

15.43 hrs.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

[*English*]

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs wants to make a statement.

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT) :** I wish to make a statement. Because of urgent government business, the session is extended by a day. The House will sit tomorrow also.

Secondly, I wish to make a request to the hon. Members. To-day after the sitting is over, Parliamentary Affairs Department has made arrangements for dinner for all the members.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** I hope the House agrees to it.

**HON. MEMBERS :** We agree. We have no objection.

15.44 hrs.

## RESOLUTION RE. CONVERSION OF AIR AND DOORDARSAN INTO AUTONOMOUS CORPORATIONS CONTD.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI HAFIZ MOHD. SIDDIQ :** At that time the Janata Party Government had resorted to such propaganda which had created feelings of hatred among the people of the country. Today Doordarshan and A.I.R. are creating a very healthy atmosphere and they are broadcasting factual news. The manner in which not only internal news but foreign news is broadcast, is praiseworthy. But the allegations levelled in this resolution indicate that these people want to make them a company and when such bodies are turned into a company, it is well known that they cannot show good performance. I, therefore, feel that in this resolution there is nothing useful for A.I.R. and Doordarshan because now a days they

are giving very good programmes. All the present programmes on A.I.R. and Doordarshan, like it Krishi Darshan or Youth programme or Children's programme, help in creating a congenial atmosphere. Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I would like to submit to the hon Minister that the Sunday Film on T. V. should be such as may help the children in building their character and increasing a congenial atmosphere. If we insist on such films, it will help in creating good feelings among children. Today such programmes are needed as may create a national feeling among children so that they may treat national property as their own property. Such programmes should be shown to them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir in the programmes broadcast by A.I.R. the name of the Prime Minister does figure. It does not mean that it is done simply to praise him, but it is done to cover Government activities and while referring to the various works executed by Government. His name is mentioned on behalf of Government. The allegation that it has become a medium of propaganda of the Congress Party is not good in taste.

With these words I oppose this resolution and feel that the programmes being broadcast telecast by A.I.R. and Doordarshan at present will continue to be broadcast telecast in future also. Besides, still better programmes will continue to be broadcast so that a national feeling is created among our children and they can rise to the occasion boldly. With these words I conclude.

**SHRI ANOOP CHAND SHAH** (Bombay North) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir I rise to oppose the resolution which is before the House for making AIR and Doordarshan autonomous bodies the hon. member Shri Jaipal Reddy questioned the stand taken by me. I would like to tell him that if a member from this side had moved it by mistake, he would have certainly opposed it.

**SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY** : No, I would not have done so.

**SHRI ANOOP CHAND SHAH** : You would have certainly opposed it but we are not opposing it just because it has come from that side of the House but because we have given a lot of thought to it.

You know that after Independence, many Corporations were set up in the country. How are they working? If a Corporation does excellent work, even then you oppose us by saying that we want to adjust certain ruling party people and are, therefore, setting up new corporations. Just now some are said that Shri Chandrashekhar's 'Padayatra' was not telecast on Doordarshan. I would like to give another example here. Shrimati Mrinal Gore was a member of this House. When she was contesting elections to the Bombay Assembly, she was project in a discussions on the housing problem telecast by Bombay Doordarshan. Had the Congress Government wanted, they would not have allowed her to be projected by Doordarshan at the time. It was due to this that her chances of victory brightened and she won the election.

[English]

**SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY** : You are only strengthening my arguments. Any party would tend to do that. Therefore, make it autonomous.

[Translation]

**SHRI ANOOP CHAND SHAH** : You say that the then AICC Secretary, Shri Rajiv Gandhi was shown on T. V. during his tour of Bombay but Shri Chandrashekhar was not shown. It might have been heppened due to some reason but Shrimati Mrinal Gore was projected on T.V. at that time. Had Government wanted, this programme could have been postponed.

My submission is that when we oppose other corporations also, why should we support the demand for making it an autonomous body?

These cannot be the same medicine for all the diseases. You are comparing

All India Radio with BBC. Since 1980, when Shrimati Indira Gandhi came into power, again how much Doordarshan and All India Radio have proposed during these four years is to be seen.

Today you see Shri Gadgil or any other Minister on Doordarshan or All India Radio, that particular Minister is not projected on the media. It is the policy of Government of the principles on which Government work or the progress Government have made that is telecast Doordarshan or broadcast on All India Radio so that the people in living in every walk and corner of the country may come to know about that. You see only that Shri Gadgil or Shri Rajiv Gandhi have been shown on T.V. but you are not ready to listen to what they have said. The mover of the Resolution has heard many hon. Members. I think that you too would have felt that the Resolution for Conversion of Doordarshan and AIR into corporations is not good. You should withdraw this Resolution. This is what I am expecting from you. With this I would like to submit two or three things to the hon. Member.

Injustice is being meted out to the artistes by All India Radio and Doordarshan. You should think about this. So far as the Advisory Committee of Doordarshan and All India Radio is concerned, it is not functioning properly. The injustice which is being done to the artistes by giving representation in the Advisory Committee on the basis of popularity should be removed.

The progress made by All India Radio and Doordarshan should be made more and more known to all the people in the country. With these words I conclude and request the mover of the Resolution to withdraw his Resolution. I oppose this Resolution.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjarpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, Shri Jaipal Reddy has correctly said that Shri Nehru had stated in the Constituent Assembly that he wanted All India Radio to be like BBC. I want to say a small thing.

I have read the reference to the Constituent Assembly and after that he, till the end of his life had commended All India Radio thousands of times. If I say that I wanted to live in Simla in 1948 but more I want to live Delhi in 1985, which of the two will be accepted. My wish to live in Simla or in Delhi? It is no use quoting Shri Nehru out of context.

[English]

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : For you has Nehru become outdated ?

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : No, but you are quoting him out of context. He praised All India Radio several times after that.

[Translation]

The second thing he has said is about the Chanda Committee. In this case also he has quoted the Chanda Committee out of context. I would tell you some thing about this Committee the Chanda Committee was set up in 1962 when China invaded us. Many things were being said about AIR and it was being said that it did not report correctly. At that time, Chanda Committee was set up. The Chanda Committee recommended making it an autonomous body for the purposes recruitment and pay scales etc. It did not comment about the programmes. Later on the Verghese Committee was appointed. The Verghese Committee Report is on a very high pedestal. I have been a colleague of Shri Verghese. I have worked with him for many years. He is quite an idealistic person. If today he is asked to submit a report on this subject he will throw three fourth of his earlier Report into the dustbin. He is a thorough gentlemen.

[English]

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : He was not the only Member of the Committee. He was its Chairman assisted by various experts. It was a unanimous report.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : I know what the Janata Government did.

## [Translation]

Therefore, I have mentioned all these reports. When it is said that Doordarshan and All India Radio should be made autonomous corporations, I cannot help laughing. Recently, you might have read in the foreign newspapers like the *International Herald*, the *Tribune* and *Times* lying in the Library that the people there are losing faith in BBC and they are feeling that BBC's functioning is not satisfactory. They are not happy with BBC's work. The people in England are not happy with BBC; even then Shri Jaipal Reddy wants that a BBC type corporation should be set up. There are H.B.C. and other Channels in America, which are private and, therefore, All India Radio and Doordarshan should also be handed over to a private body according to Shri Reddy. The concept of Public Corporations emerged after the Second World War. Its biggest supporter was Prof. Robson who said that the Public Corporations would do all those functions which neither Government nor private body could do. We have constituted many Public Corporations and some of them have functioned very well but of some others you yourself are seeing the condition. A few days back during a discussion a reference to the Rohtas Industries was made that its condition was pitiable. The Bihar Government say that they are not ready to take over. The Central Government are also not agreeable to acquiring it. The people of Bihar say that whatever you may do with it should not be converted into a Public Corporation. I am a supporter of the concept of Public Corporation but the way they are functioning, there is scope for many improvements. Just to say that All India Radio and Doordarshan should be modelled as Corporations on the lines of the BBC. is not proper.

Recently, the T.V. in our country has made much progress. I want to congratulate the hon. Minister for that. Before him, Shri Bhagat too has done a lot in this connection and extended the network to villages. Many T.V. programmes like 'Hum Log' are being appreciated. When we go to small

places and talk to the people, they complain that we do not have many programmes like 'Hum Log'. Now people prefer 'Hum Log' to the cinema. Therefore, I want to ask, what new thing will happen if it is modelled on the pattern of BBC. I do not think it is going to make any special change.

I agree on this point that improvement in the programmes should be demanded. You have recently started a new programme 'Janvani' or T.V. in which a Minister has to reply to the questions of people, face to face. This programme is very popular. All the newspapers and the people of the country have appreciated this programme. Had Government an iota of *mala fide* intention or suspicion, they would not have allowed it to be telecast on T.V. I would request that such programmes should be broadcast in those areas also where T.V. has not yet started. When we go to our constituency, people ask us why we have not managed to get the railway lines laid or the trains started in that area. That day Shri Bansi Lal gave a very good reply in 'Janvani' by whom. Where was the money? Let the money be allocated and I shall start the new trains, get the new lines laid. If such programmes are broadcast on radio in the places where T.V. facility is not available, many of our difficulties will be solved.

Regarding improvement in the programmes, I would suggest to Shri Gadgil that in the programmes relating to International and National affairs, if instead of inviting scholarly persons such people are invited can explain the problem to the common man in the layman's language, that will be better. For example, take the problem of Sri Lanka which the people of North India have not understood properly. If one person or more persons could explain the problem in common language through a talk, then public opinion for that can be formed. Similarly, there are many other programmes which can be telecast in very simple and spoken language. J.N.U. or Delhi University professors hold the view that people know every

thing, but it is not a reality. The meaning of the problem must be explained to people in detail.

The T.V. programme "*E K Drishtikon*" was earlier telecast, in which information about current affairs was given in a very simple language. The problem and the solution thereof were explained in simple words. That programme was very popular. It should be started again. In addition to this, plays and other items of entertainment should be telecast more and more. Your programmes are very good and I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for this. In the end I would like to say that the time has not come yet when A.I.R. and T.V. be converted into autonomous Corporations.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : You do not want to do so...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.S. RAJHANS : Time has not yet come and will never come. You are here because of the Congress Party. We know what your party has done. During the period of 3 years it ruined the entire country. You have talked about three generations. Had there not been Moti Lal, Jawahar Lal Nehru, and Indira Gandhi, the country would not have made so much progress and you and I would not have been here. It is a democratic country. That is why I and you are here and its credit goes to these three leaders...

*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now Mr. K.D. Sultanpuri. Only five minutes for you. There are other Bills which we have to take up. Already, from four hours, the time for this subject has been increased to six hours. The Minister has also to reply.

[Translation]

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Simla) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I am very sorry to point out that the intellectuals from the other side made a reference to Andhra Pradesh and the rest of the

country and pleaded for converting A.I.R. and Doordarshan into Corporations. I would like to inform them that Corporations may not prove very useful. The performance of the Corporations functioning in Andhra Pradesh will also not be very good, no matter whether your party is in power there or not. The approach of our Doordarshan is very practical and right throughout the country. An hon. Member from the other side has said just now that the programme of the Prime Minister, who was General Secretary previously, was presented in a very good manner, which led to the defeat of Janata Party. I would like to inform him that every party is given an opportunity for propagating its views, etc. Time has been fixed for all the parties, be it, the Communist Party or the Janata Party. In 1977, you had formed a grand Coalition Government and the top leaders were associated with that. Wherever your party was in power at that time, you had taken an oath at Mahatma Gandhi's Samadhi not to live in palatial bungalows, not to fight with one another but to serve the country. But after a period of two and a half years your coalition came to end. In this way attempts were made to disintegrate the country. If we bring out forward a proposal for setting up a corporation, you will oppose it, because your only job is to oppose. No concrete proposal comes from your side. Our Minister is very efficient and an intellectual. By his efforts very good programmes are being telecast on Doordarshan. There are some programmes for the benefit of the farmers also. Song, dance drama and other programmes are telecast. I had said earlier also that aged persons are recruited in A.I.R. and Doordarshan Directorates. Young boys and girls should be appointed there. Some very good artistes with unexplored talent can be found in hill areas. Doordarshan should take steps to appoint them. Very good programmes are being telecast on T.V. throughout the country. It is not an easy job to provide T.V. facility to 70 per cent of the people. The various works and programmes executed after Independence go to the credit of the Congress Party and its

Plan. Our party is taking the nation on the path of progress in a planned way, I, therefore, would like to urge you to help them and not insist on the setting up of corporations. None of your purposes is going to be solved by the setting up of Corporations. However, there are a number of Corporations in the country, like the Scheduled Castes Development Corporations and many other public sector Corporations and undertakings, which are running in loss. I therefore, submit that A.I.R. and Doordarshan should be allowed to remain in the hands of Government. You will not get any complaint about any type of partial attitude under the existing system. Injustice will not be meted out to anyone. Our Government's policy is that injustice should not be meted out to anybody. You feel that injustice has been done to you because every time our party comes in a majority. This time 401 Members of our party have come to Lok Sabha. Your party-men were defeated everywhere. For this, we are not to blame. It is the people's mandate. A.I.R. and Doordarshan are not to blame for this. Why do you want conversion of AIR and Doordarshan into autonomous Corporations? A.I.R. and Doordarshan did not cause your defeat. The people have defeated you. You wanted to become the representative of the masses. Even your top leaders were defeated by the people. A.I.R. and Doordarshan are not to blame for this. A.I.R. and Doordarshan did not play any part in the installation of Shri Ramarao's Government in Andhra Pradesh. So, you should allow them to function as they are and withdraw your resolution because you are otherwise and intelligent enough. You should not insist on setting up corporation for everything. Instead you should make use of your energy in bringing about improvement in their working.

I take this opportunity to say something about Himachal Pradesh. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards Kasauli T.V. Relay Centre. I had written many letters in this regard. Mr. Sathe

visited the place and assured the people that the work would be completed within a period of one year. I have completed my last term and I was present at the time of its inauguration by the former Minister of Law, but it is lying as it was. I humbly request that in order to provide and expand T.V. facility in hill and border areas the work on this centre may be expedited. I know that you are trying to provide this facility in the areas where it is lacking and for this you deserve congratulations. I hope that you will take note of my submission and take steps to expand T.V. facilities in more and more areas of Himachal Pradesh. With these words I would like to tell Mr. Reddy that he is a good speaker and a man of wisdom. I would request him to withdraw his resolution as Government will definitely pay attention towards it.

SHRI ABDUL RASHID KABULI (Srinagar) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the resolution under discussion in this House. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of Government and the hon. Minister towards two or three things. Firstly, under the present set-up in the country, the concept of regional parties has become a reality, there are many states in the country, where regional parties are in power and they are running governments there on the basis of regional culture and regional aspirations. For example, there is the Ramachandran's government in Tamilnadu, Telgu Desham government in Andhra Pradesh, Janata Party government in Karnataka and the so-called National Conference government in Jammu and Kashmir. I would like to inform you that regional parties are not anti-national. Instead, they have become a reality which we shall have to accept. The leader of a regional party, i. e., Telgu Desham, which has 30 Members in this House has been given the status of leader of the Opposition in this august House as against any national party. Parliamentary set-up is a legacy and the propaganda being made in this regard is baseless. You should take care of regional aspirations, regio-

nal demand and regional culture upsurge. That is why we say... (Interruptions)... Region within nation... Our feelings are patriotic. We want to assure you that regional aspirations and regional parties have nothing to do with such things. There are regional aspirations for names sake only, but their feelings are not anti-national. It is a fact. You should not adopt a yardstick but which you term all the regional parties as bad and anti-national. Such propaganda should not be resorted to. It will be a wrong thing. Under the Constitution, more regional parties will emerge and they will form their governments. Nobody can challenge their coming to power. In this connection I would like to point-out that regional cultural ethos find little time in the national programme telecast by Doordarshan. Through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister that the regional cultural ethos should be given more time in the National Programme of T.V. with a view to develop them. The time for the National Programme is being increased. But a complaint is being received that the regional language and culture of the states find very little time on the T. V. programmes.

The third thing which I want to mention is that so far as giving jobs to All India Radio and Doordarshan is concerned, the regions are being given very low representation. Today, the way the officers are being brought from other States, is resulting in a sort of encroachment which has led to confrontation and an unsavoury situation. Therefore, I would request you that in the matter of appointments, more and more opportunities may be given to such writers who have rich knowledge of the respective local language and culture as they have a great importance.

The fourth thing which I want to point out is that a sort of cultural evasion is taking place in Kashmir, Punjab, and the north eastern provinces, Meghalaya, Himachal, Haryana and Rajasthan, because B.B.C. has installed very powerful transmitters in Sri Lanka and very near a State of our country due

to which this evasion is taking place and our people are being attracted to them. In this connection, I would like to draw your attention, particularly, to Punjab where your programmes are not of good quality compared to Lahore. Your television cannot compete with Lahore television. Your radio cannot compete with Radio Pakistan. Your radio station in Punjab is very small as compared to the Lahore Radio Station. Then, how will you compete with them? You will have to suffer a lot on this account because these countries are our neighbouring countries. Millions of our countrymen living in the rural areas will be carried away by their political propaganda. Besides, these programmes will be very harmful for us. Therefore, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that powerful transmitters should be installed in the sensitive areas of the states of Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat (Kathiawad), particularly in Jammu and Kashmir as also in the areas bordering Bangladesh and more attention should be paid to the television network in these areas. Keeping in view the aspirations of the people of these areas as also to ensure that our programmes reach the neighbouring countries, the programmes should be relayed from these transmitters and television centres. Therefore, I support the Resolution moved here which seeks give it an autonomous status so that it may have more and more local representation.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V. N. GADGIL): Sir, I am thankful to the Mover of the Resolution if not for anything else, for giving an opportunity to restate and reiterate the Government's point of view on the question of autonomy. It is not as if this is raised for the first time. It was raised several times in the past and the Government had made its stand clear. One hon. Member of the opposite side said that it was not clear, but the stand was made clear several times. For example, it was stated and I will read out the reply given at that time :

AIR and Doordarshan have been providing due coverage and certain guidelines are followed.

I will come to that later on. But I would like the House to permit me an indulgence and that indulgence is not to reply to each individual point or to individual cases. Unfortunately, this year my Ministry was not discussed and it was guillotined. Naturally, some Members have taken the opportunity to project their demands or their grievances. With your permission, I propose to reply to those individual cases to Members individually. Here I want to confine myself to the broad aspect.

I would like the House to view this question in a broader outline and in a larger canvas. That canvas I find in the Preamble of our Constitution. Sir Earnest Barker, who thought political science for 30 years in Cambridge, reflected, pondered and considered various aspects of democracy. And I had the opportunity to learn from him in my student days. When Sir Earnest Barker wanted to write a book which is his *Magnum Opus*, which is called *Introduction to Social and Political Theory*, he says in its introduction: "I wanted to find where the soul of the western democracy as developed over the years" He says: "I have found it in the Preamble to the Constitution of India." As a preface to that book he had just reproduced our Preamble—We, the people of India, adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution in order to establish Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic. That is the canvas on which whether autonomy or not should be looked. And for that my charter for Doordarshan is to inform educate and entertain. Both these things have to be seen. The text of the Resolution has to be read in the context of this canvas and this charter. If that is the correct approach, then you will permit me to say in broad outlines what I regard as the role of AIR and TV. I would say that if this be the object which is mentioned in the Preamble, then the structure of AIR or Door-

darshan or the programmes that are to be produced, broadcast or telecast, have to be looked from that point of view. If that is correct, let us judge the performance not by what happened, whether this incident was covered or that was not covered. That will be going in comparatively insignificant things. May be this was covered and that was not covered; this item was highlighted and that was not highlighted. That is not the approach. The approach I request the House to take is what I have indicated about.

Let me start with Doordarshan. I would divide my intervention in four or five aspects. Everyone in the House has said that there has been a tremendous expansion of TV. I would submit that what is important is not expansion as such. That, of course, is remarkable. Something the House and the nation should be proud of is that this whole concept of low power transmission, which is nowhere else, is designed by our own engineers departing from the international standards. If we had gone in all for high power centres which costs crores of rupees, it would have taken years and the people of India would not have got the benefit of T.V. viewing. So, this concept is Indian in design. Then, almost the entire equipment is produced in India, no imported equipment, and the implementation has been the record times. As you are all aware, in four months 116 transmitters have been installed in almost all parts of the country—a unique record unprecedented in the history of the world. Such an expansion has been there for which our engineers, our administrators and our staff deserve our congratulations.

There is another remarkable thing also. The normal experience of any organisation is that when it expands, the quality goes down, at least in the initial stages. But here is case where expansion has taken place, viewing time has been increased, yet the quality has not only not gone down, but the other day there was a slapping, applause in the House that the quality has, in fact improved. That again is an achieve-

ment for our engineers, our administrators, I am not claiming for myself. It is an achievement for our engineers, our programme planners and all the staff members for which again they deserve our congratulations.

There are various aspects of the programme. I can give all the details but that will be taking too much of the time. Take the variety. We have to provide for all strata of the society. Some hon. Member said that they are no programme of folk lore or for rural areas. Let us see what is the variety provided and then the constraint we have. The constraint is that time available is very limited. There are number of claimants that the time should be allotted to this programme. Within the time available, see the variety. We have provided programmes trying to cater to all the strata of the society. There is 'Panorama' which is once a fortnight. This is a current affairs programme giving the people an idea as to what are the current important issues before the nation.

Then there is 'Jana vani'. About that I will come later. That is also once a fortnight. In this programmes there are points and counter-points, *Paksha*, *Pritapaksha*. Somebody presents one point of view, another person gives the other viewpoint. So, both points of view come before the public. It is both in Hindi and English—point, counter—point; *Paksha*, *Pritipaksha*. Then, we have have 'Folk Lore and Traditional Arts, frequency is 28 minutes. It is once every fortnight. I can read out the list. I will omit my own State :

Folk lore and Traditional Arts of West Bengal. Baul songs, Jatra, Boat songs.

Madhya Pradesh : Pavithi Dance, Pandvani, Alha Udal.

I can give the whole list. Every fortnight there is one programme of 28 minutes duration, giving folk arts of

Then, there is a programme called 'Folk Instruments of India'. It is once a week—a series of programmes showing various folk musical instruments. Then, there is a programme named 'In This Our Land.' This is once a fortnight. It features the arts, crafts and the cultural heritage of various parts of India, including Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka. There is a full list. Another programme is 'Kavi aur Kavita'. This is once a week giving exposure to various forms of poetry of various languages, Bengali, Hindi..., I have got the whole list. Then, there is a programme 'Charal Music'—(*Interruptions*). I have not interrupted, you also kindly don't interrupt. After I have finished, you can ask the questions.

*Choral Music*—this again is once a week.

*Places of Tourist Interest*—once a fortnight.

*Customs and Traditions of India*—Once a fortnight.

*Year of the Youth*—a weekly programme.

*Parivartan*—shows how the rural scene is changing. It is a programme only for that. It is once in fortnight.

*Regional Light Music*—once a week.

One hon. Member mentioned that we are not showing what our public sector has achieved. The programme called *Towards Progress* is a programme entirely meant for showing achievements of the public sector. This is once a *Issues and Approaches*. This also discusses various problems before the country. It is once in fortnight.

*Looking at Art*. Here various forms of art all over the country are projected. It is once a fortnight.

*Premier Institutions in India*. I do not state to claim that this is what I started.

There are a number of institutions in India like the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research which have got some magnificent achievement. Why should they not come before the people? Therefore, we have started this particular programme called *Premier Institutions in India*.

Another remarkable thing that we have done is a programme called *Great Masters*. It is every fortnight. The idea is that today we have people like Pandit Bhim Sen Joshi, Kumar Gandharv and Lala Amarnath. These people were at zenith of their career. A few years later the new generation may not know anything about them. Therefore, we have this programme called *Great Masters*. The idea is not only to show to you and to me, but also to preserve it in the archives so that the later generations will know what were the achievements of these great masters. I can read out the list. Already we have got seventeen, including the two-three names that I have mentioned.

Then there is a programme called *States of The Union*. This is once a month. It shows various aspects of geography history and problems of each State of India.

About another aspect of JANAVANI, I want to speak later.

Then there is a criticism about objectivity. I do not propose to deal with one question raised by an hon. Member opposite about the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Already there was a Calling Attention debated and discussed in this house and the facts and figures were given. If I deal with that, I will be only repeating what I had already said. Therefore, I do not think there is a point in this. If you ask me in a non-partisan way, I would like to say I think there is a case for complaint by the ruling party. I will show you how. Take the news analysis that I have got it made. In the AIR news bulletins between the period 25-11-1984 and 24-12-1984 for the election, the number

of lines given to the Congress Party was 1, 054 and to the Opposition 1, 189. They start with an advantage. If I divide equally, the ruling party will get one line, but because they are ten, they get ten lines. So they have an advantage. As they break up and form new parties, they will get more lines.

**SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY :** If you yield, I would like to have one clarification. In this calculation the time taken by the Prime Minister and the Ministers is not included. Therefore, the whole statistics is misleading.

**SHRI V. N. GADGIL :** The Prime Minister is the Prime Minister of the country. Therefore, he cannot be included in one party or another. He is Minister of the nation.

**SHRI BASUDEB ACHARYA (Bankura) :** The Minister is a Minister, he cannot be included. Similarly, the Chief Minister is a Chief Minister and he should also not be included.

**SHRI V. N. GADGIL :** If the Prime Minister inaugurates a river project, is it a party matter?

**SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA :** Are Minister also included in this?

**SHRI V. N. GADGIL :** Now, you see the figure for the period between October 1984 and December 1984. Time given to the Congress Party by All India Radio was two hours fiftyfive minutes and thirty seconds, time given to Opposition parties was four hours twentyeight minutes and twentyseven seconds. It is double.

**SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY :** It is a misleading classification.

**SHRI V. N. GADGIL :** There is no question of misleading. I know it has hurt you, therefore, your reaction is like this.

**SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA :** Can you give partywise break up?

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : At the moment I do not have. I do not have party-wise just now.

Doordarshan time given to Congress Party—79 minutes; time given to Opposition Parties—163 minutes and 30 seconds. (*Interruptions*). You are not satisfied by this ?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : There are three kinds of lies—white lies, damn lies and statistics.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : Henceforward do I take it that he will never quote any statistics ?

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : It is a jugglery of statistics.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : You can always say that. If it is inconvenient to you, you can always say it is jugglery.

Let us take the second aspect. From January till last month various programmes were there—Issues before Parliament, Reaction to Budget, Janavani, Panorama, Current Events—I myself collected the list. And do you know, I have got 25 Members of Opposition on the TV in these programmes and the number of Congress Members was much less, not even half ? When I got a programme on corruption, whom did I invite ? Did I invite any member from the Congress Party ? No. Mrs. Mrinal Gore and Mr. Krishan Kant—both of your Party—were invited and no Congress (I) member was invited to discuss on corruption. Still they will say, 'You are partial.'

AN HON. MEMBER : Experts were invited.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : Apart from M. Ps., a lot of independent journalists were brought who made critical comments about the Congress (I) Party both on AIR and Doordarshan. I can

Assembly elections were analysed, one of the commentators was critical of the decisions taken by the Central Government, by the Congress Party, on the analysis.

Then take the issue of Punjab. Some Party were unhappy, but we allowed a programme on Punjab, a discussion in which the commentary was not only critical of Government, but perhaps exceeding the limits or the guidelines issued by the Media Advisory Committee. But still we did not interrupt, we did not cut out.

Then, again there are a number of other programmes in which you find a large number of Opposition Members' point of view—Point Counterpoint, Current Events and other things. In fact, as I said, there may be some case for Ruling Party Members to complain that they are not getting enough time. We are bending over backward to give Opposition a chance to project because they appeared to think that only when they come on the TV they win elections. So, have your chance

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : There was white man's burden and now this is Congress Rule's burden.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : It is a case of kettle calling the pot black !

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : You are a Professor in English, you can go on talking, but I confine myself to substance and not the language.

I do not wish to refer to individual points, but since the matter has been raised, I want to make it clear that Doordarshan did cover Mr. Chandrasekhar's padayatra and he was interviewed by Doordarshan. Then again, one hon. Member carried the impression about these reports. About Chanda Committee Report, one of my colleagues has already replied, I need not repeat it. The Verghese Committee started on the assumption that there must be autonomy, they did not recommend

autonomy is to be there and the structure that should be there. So, the Verghese Committee is irrelevant. Then, about the Joshi Committee, again what one hon. Member said is not correct. It does not recommend an autonomous corporation. What it recommends is that the Ministry of I and B should be restructured on the lines of the Railway Board with Information Board comprising of professional heads. Let me share my experience. I was the Minister for Defence Production, there is the Ordnance Board; I was in charge of Communications, there is a P. and T. Board, and you have the Railways Board. I do not want to give any views on Joshi Committee's recommendation. But one thing is certain that a Board is a different structure, and an autonomous Corporation is totally different structure. Joshi Committee has not recommended autonomous Corporation.

Many people here and outside of waxed eloquent about BBC. I am sorry to say that some people may not agree with me but, there is a section in the middle class in this country which unfortunately still has the hang-over of the British empire. Westminster type, wonderful, British democracy, what a wonderful democracy, the British democracy is very responsible; the British judiciary is very independent; the BBC is impartial. These three myths, Mr. Reddy, I can explode with documents and facts and figures. About the first two, this is not the occasion. About BBC, let me tell you.

You think it is very credible. It is very impartial, very independent, no interference with Government. All this is baseless. First, you kindly read James Margach book. He was a London Times correspondent, political correspondent for 50 years. What is his conclusion? His conclusion right from Lloyd George up to recent years, Wilson and beyond, is that every British Prime Minister interfered with the media.

He has quoted documents of Cabinet minutes which showed this trend from Lloyd George onwards. He has made

only two exceptions. One Mr. Attlee and the other is Mr. Hume. These two only did not.

Lord Hill, as you are aware, you are a student of these things, he was a Chairman of BBC and he has written a book "Behind the Screen : Broadcasting memoirs of Lord Hill". What is the experience? When Conservatives are in power, the Labour say that the BBC is pro-Conservative. When Labour is in power, the Conservatives say there is a bias against them. I will read to you only one sentence :

"Recent and new development has been the criticism attracted by bias by the news itself."

Its news is biased. That is the allegation, criticism, against BBC, by their own people. But our people say, "Nothing. All India Radio is useless. Doordarshan is useless. BBC is credible".

Again you see Lord Hill :

"Broadcasting demands not only a wide range of professional skills but a capacity for instant decision."

Somebody on the spot has to take a decision to do or not to do. He is not politically motivated. He takes a particular decision. Then political motivation is attributed to him. It is such a race against time.

You say All India Radio was very good before Congress Government. I would like to mention to you an example from the history of old AIR. Before independence and after 37 years and from then onwards, Mahatma Gandhi met the 10 Viceroy. And the Viceroy's Office wanted it exclusively to go on AIR.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : You say that the Viceroy met Mahatma Gandhi.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : Then the person in charge was so affected by the

importance of the event that he started producing a draft on how it should be given. First he wrote "Mr. Gandhi called on the Viceroy. The meeting lasted 30 minutes." He said "No, no. It is not correct. The Viceroy gave audience to Mr. Gandhi for 30 minutes." He said "No, no." Like that four or five drafts were prepared. The time was running out. The 9.0' Clock news was to go on the AIR. As he was thinking, the chaprasi picked up all the drafts and handed over to the reader and he read all drafts on AIR. Ultimately the same news was given in five times.

This is what happens. Therefore, there is an instant decision and if you think that I set in my office or residence all the time telephoning Doordarshan or AIR and say give this, don't give this it is a false picture.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): I remember the news. Ultimately it was "Mahatma Viceroy met Mr. Gandhi."

SHRI V.N. GADGIL: May be, I read it long back. You may be right. So, the point I am making is this: just because a particular news is given or not given, please do not attribute political motives. The man on the spot has to decide in a minute or even half a minute. May be, his judgment is wrong. You can say that the judgment is wrong. But to say that somebody from above instructed him to give this or not to give this in my submission, is giving a false picture.

Hugh Jenkins, who was a Minister in the British Government, while talking about BBC, says:

"BBC itself was a part of the establishment and those who ran it knew their place in the scheme of things as well as the leaders of the Church or the directors of the Bank of England. Their role was to be independent inside the aviary, to fly about freely but not to question the shape of the cage and, preferably, not to be aware of its existence."

This is the BBC's objectivity as given by a person who was a Minister in the British from 1974 to 1976.

This is from The Economist of 10th May. What does it say about the BBC

"It is too big, too arrogant, too ambitious, too unpatriotic too elitist too unprepared for the new technology. If it does not behave better, it will be punished."

It also mentions of "the government-of-the-day's attempt to manipulate it".

It also says:

"...neither leading political party likes the Beeb, each seeing it was partisan to the other..."

The best is this:

"A Labour MP . . ."

Because they are nearer to you.

A Labour MP says this:

"BBC is run largely by people who do not know the working class..but are seeking evidently to mould the working class"

These are the who run the BBC. And you say that BBC is very credible and that the AIR is not.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sir, you will permit me some extension of time; I may be exceeding my limit. But this is a quotation which I would like to read out. Some people may think that I should not read this, but I feel that I should point out. It is a little vulgar ...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The Minister in U. K. might be quoting our AIR in the House of Commons.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL: Some Dandavate there may be replying to that.

Mr. David Scott, who was a famous producer, as all of you know, found the working conditions in BBC so bad for a creative artist that he resigned; and his letter of resignation has almost become an important part of history. He says :

“To work for the BBC was like\*\* for three reasons : first because there was no possible pleasure involved; secondly because of the grave danger of being overlaid; and thirdly because there was no possibility of seeing any results for twenty-one months.”

This is BBC ! Some people who are eloquent about BBC say that it is a great institution, it is credible, it is very beautiful and all that. Let them listen to the BBC; let them not listen to the AIR. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Already the Minister has mentioned. I do not want to create any precedent. If it is unparliamentary, it will go. That is all that I can say.

SHRI. S. JAIPAL REDDY : There is nothing unparliamentary.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : As I was saying, we are trying to accommodate, as much as possible, the other point of view. I have given various instances.

Now let me say a little about the Janvani Programme. This was Prime Minister's idea. His idea was that each Minister should come face to face with people. The idea has been worked out by us. And from the reaction that I have seen in the press, it is welcome. I must say that my colleagues people have also welcomed it. We come to know where the weakness of our administration is. People bring their grievances to us. Let me remind this House that it is not at all one-sided. You have seen in one programme that the bad sugar which was distributed was brought; we had a visual there. About the telephone not working, that was shown. It is not as if we are trying to

conceal something and only have one-sided propaganda. The whole effort has been to increase the credibility of AIR and Doordarshan, to accommodate as far as possible all points of view in the various programmes that I have mentioned. Therefore, it is not fair to say that we are using it as a ruling Party machine or some kind of a platform.

About the rest of the matters, as I have pointed out at the initial stage, I will seek the indulgence of the House to reply to it individually. There are more than 25 speakers. Each one has made on an average about 5 points. If I have to say whether a TV station should be set up here or not, it will take a long time. So I will reply to them individually.

Let me conclude like this, I mentioned at the outset the canvas against which it must be seen and the charter which is given to me and the Ministry. It is in this context that we have to judge the performance of AIR and the TV. I do not think that by mere autonomy the whole problem will be solved. If I have to interfere, whether it is autonomous or not, I will go on interfering. If I do not want to interfere, whether it is a Government Department or an autonomous corporation, that makes no difference and I will not interfere. There are certain guidelines, very carefully worded guidelines and formulated after careful consideration—not now but several years ago. There was the Modia Advisory Committee and our functioning is editorial freedom within the framework of those guidelines. If the House wants, I will read out those guidelines which are very detailed and which have lasted 20-25 years.

As far as the election time is concerned and as far as the party broadcasts are concerned, the whole scheme, as you know, was evolved in consultation with all parties and with the approval of the Election Commission and we have not deviated in a single way from those guidelines. Therefore, we have to judge it against that canvas.

I would say this. I am not one of those so-called middleclass cynical intelle-

ctuals who say that everything in this country is bad and everything in that country is good. I say this is a great country, a powerful country, a progressive nation, a throbbing nation, a pulsating nation which is marching ahead evoking the admiration and respect of the whole world and it is the job of the AIR and the Doordarshan to project this country, to project this nation, to help in its advance and to help the people in their advance. This is the national effort and I do claim that AIR is making its contribution to that great national effort.

**SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY** (Nalgonda) : As many as 25 members took part in this discussion. I must thank all the members who have participated and who have given valuable suggestions 18 from the Congress (I) and 6 from the Opposition took part in the discussion.

Just now the Minister replied. I never said in my resolution that the autonomous body should be of the BBC type or Voice of America I only said that it should be an autonomous body. It should be set up by an Act of Parliament. It should be an independent, autonomous body. I want to make that clear.

The Minister and many Congress Members who spoke criticised the BBC's functioning or the Voice of America's functioning. But as Mr. Jaipal Reddy pointed out, when Indira Gandhi, their beloved leader was assassinated, that message came on BBC at 10 or 10.30 a.m. while the AIR gave it only after 6.30 p.m. . . (Interruptions) It was the BBC which gave the correct picture. Again when the TDP got the majority on the 6th, AIR announced it only on the 7th of March. Why this delay? Whenever a Congress member gets elected, they give history of that Congress Member and whenever a Congress Member gets defeated, then also they give the history of that particular person. For example, I will cite the example of a member who is sitting by my side. He defeated some big man but they have not given his name but

they gave the name of the person who was defeated. Why? Sir, it is not All India Radio, it is All Indira Radio, All Indira Congress Radio. That is a fact. Sir, on 4th and 5th of this month, the Doordarshan showed a live telecast of the AICC session. Now, are you going to telecast the sessions of the other parties also? (Interruptions)

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V. N. GADGIL)** : Live telecast was given for the Centenary Celebrations of the Congress Party. When the other parties celebrate their Centenary functions, we will telecast them.

**SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY** : It is the Indira Congress which celebrated the Centenary function. It is National Congress. The National Congress is split into a number of parties like Congress (S), Congress (J) Congress (R) and Congress (I). (Interruptions). Sir, the Doordarshan should be effective, impartial and independent. Now, we find that it is not independent and impartial. It is depending upon the Minister, depending upon the Ministry. They will work for their party, they will project their policies and propagate the image of their party. Now, the hon. Minister has given misleading statistics. You would say that the Minister means Government, Prime Minister is for India and the Congress Party is for Indian people. That is what you propagate. But what about the other parties? You have not said anything about the other parties. You are showing the leaders of your party, the working president of the Congress Party, General Secretary of the Congress Party and even for the appointment of the President of the Youth Congress, they have mentioned under 'news heading' that so and so person has been nominated as the President of the Youth Congress-I. Why are you not taking other parties into consideration? Every party is electing its President and its Party Secretary. Why don't you mention their names and show their photographs in the TV? (Interruptions). All these things show that you are partial. They are not

independent because they act as per the wishes of the Minister. I am not finding fault with the officials. If a particular officer does not oblige, he will be shifted to some other place. I would therefore request the hon. Members of this House to support my resolution so that the TV and the A. I. R. can function impartially and independently without any interference from the Government side. If they are autonomous bodies, they can be impartial and independent, not under the Ministry, under the Minister, under the Party to which he belongs. My Resolution is for converting the TV and the A. I. R. into autonomous bodies.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr Moolchand Daga, are you withdrawing your amendment ?

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Yes, Sir. I withdraw my amendment.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Is it the pleasure of the House to allow Mr. Mool Chand Daga to withdraw his amendment ?

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

*(The amendment was by leave withdrawn)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is :

"This House resolves that the All India Radio and Doordarshan be converted into autonomous corporations to ensure objectivity, impartiality and independence of the mass media."

*The motion was negatived.*

16.55 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE : RELIEF TO  
FARMERS AFFECTED BY  
DROUGHT

[English]

SHRI JANAK RAJ GUPTA (Jammu) :  
I beg to move :

"That this House recommends to the Government to give adequate relief to farmers affected by drought in various parts of the country this year, particularly those in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and ensure regular supply of water for irrigation and drinking purposes."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House has to allot time for this resolution. We have to take up Half-an-Hour discussion at 5.30 today. That is the time available to us. Therefore, we can proceed with the discussion upto that time. I would request the hon. Members to be very brief.

Shri Gupta may continue.

[Translation]

SHRI JANAK RAJ GUPTA (Jammu): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, due to the vagaries of nature, every year our country faces floods, droughts, storms and cyclones in different parts which cause a heavy loss in the entire country. A loss of about Rs. 2,000 crores is suffered due to drought every year whereas the annual loss suffered due to floods is to the tune of about Rs. 1200 crores. There are no two opinions that our Government at once depute special teams for survey of the affected areas and the quantum of loss suffered is assessed by the Central as well as State Governments through different agencies and they provide a lot of relief on the recommendations of such agencies. Government spend about Rs. 200 crores annually on this account.

Some areas, some States of the country are such that they have suffered heavy damage due to drought this year. These are Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and many other States . . .

AN HON. MEMBER : Uttar Pradesh is also one of them.

SHRI JANAK RAJ GUPTA : Yes Sir. Uttar Pradesh is also one of them. But, in my Resolution, I have specifically