

# LOK SABHA DEBATES

## LOK SABHA

Monday March 18, 1985/Phalguna 27,  
1906 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Replacement of Low Power Transmitters by High Power Transmitters

\*61. SHRI G.G. SWELL† :

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION  
AND BROADCASTING be pleased to  
state :

(a) whether the present Doordarshan  
Low Power Transmitters are a passing  
phase and they will be replaced by High  
Power Transmitters;

(b) whether 50 per cent of these  
transmitters are defective and are shifted  
from place to place to maintain the Sixth  
Plan target; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the staff  
in many of these Low Power Transmission  
Centres were sometimes not paid their  
salaries for months ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE  
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND  
BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) :

(a) The approved plan for expansion  
of TV services includes the replacement  
of some low power transmitters by high  
power transmitters to provide wider  
coverage.

(b) No, Sir. The transmitters are  
functioning Satisfactorily and faults are

attended to as and when they appear. No  
low Power transmitter was removed from  
any place until a higher power transmitter  
was commissioned at that place.

(c) Delay in payment of salaries to  
staff at a few transmission centres was  
reported in the initial stages of their  
commissioning. Immediate remedial action  
was taken.

SHRI G. G. SWELL : I wonder whe-  
ther he gave this answer in seriousness or  
he is speaking in levity. But before I come  
to my second question where I will ask  
a number of things, I would like to have  
some technical data : how many low  
transmitters are there in the country today;  
how many high power transmitters are go-  
ing to be installed and where and what is  
the difference in the range between a low  
power transmitter and a high power trans-  
mitter ? Whether we are making a full  
use of INSAT and whether these trans-  
mitters we have installed have the capacity  
to make a full use of INSAT ?

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : I would like to  
state that I am not given to reply in levity.  
As far as the technical questions the hon.  
member has asked, the limitation is that  
I am not a technical man. What I have  
understood is like this : high power trans-  
mitters are of two types. (1) 10 KW; (2) 1  
KW. The normal range of LPT of 10 KW  
is 120 Km. But it depends on the terrain,  
the topography, the Shadow area, also the  
height of the antenna height of the tower,  
various factors; but, normally, it is 120  
Km : in some cases, it has gone upto  
160 Km, but that is abnormal, the normal  
is 120 Km. As for as 1 KW transmitter is  
concerned, its average normal range is 60  
km and LPT of 100 watt, it is 22 km. In  
some cases, it is more; in some Cases, it  
is less. I would like to take this oppor-  
tunity to point out to the House that this  
whole concept of LPT, what is technically  
called useable signal, which may not be  
to the international standard, was develo-  
ped by our own people, our engineers

with the limited resources that we have. Therefore, these are three ranges or three types of transmitters.

His second question regarding utilization of INSAT 1 B.....

SHRI G. G. SWELL : But you have not mentioned the number of transmitters we have in the country.

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : I am prepared to lay the whole list on the Table of the House; there is no problem. But, in all, 172 transmitters are there; some are high power transmitters and some are low power transmitters.

In our definition, although it may not be the international definition, we call high power transmissions those with a capacity of 10 KW and one KW; and LPT, low power transmission is 100 watts.

As to the utilisation of INSAT-1 B, the concept of the whole Country being covered by LPTs was not there when INSAT-1 B was planned. And, therefore, in a sense we have exceeded the utilisation which was projected for INSAT-1 B. Now, with this concept having been fairly successful, a large number of LPTs have been installed. But it will be possible if transponders in the next INSAT come up, to achieve a higher utilisation. But with this present INSAT, we have utilised the capacity which we promised to utilise.

SHRI G. G. SWELL : A number of reports have come out in the Press, I would like the Minister to deny them categorically, because what we say here must carry credibility to the people in the country. It is not a question of scoring a debating point.

Well, here it says: "At Bhopal one LPT was installed in October last; subsequently it was shifted to Santiniketan" Another says, that at Bhatinda the people there have been getting signal from across the border and obviously were quite happy because they could see pictures and other things.

MR. SPEAKER : You want this to be Stopped ?

SHRI G. G. SWELL : Now I am asking him to deny this news categorically, in a manner that will carry conviction and credibility to the people of the country. Now, at Bhatinda this was going on An LPT was installed there. It was defective and even the normal reception was so badly interfeared that an angry mob man-handled an engineer I want to know whether this incident took place or not. Then there is another. It says, "The classic example is of Coimbatore where the equipment was shifted the very day after the inauguration. The manoeuvre was discovered when some curious viewers went to the LPT centre to find out why their TV sets were not receiving programmes. The centre was locked, and an employee told them that the equipment had been shifted elsewhere."

Another classic case is here. Our late lamented Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi inaugurated a transmitting centre in Asansol in January 1984. The Staff did not get any payment, any salary for four months and when they approached the Directorate, they got an answer that there was no LPT centre in Asansol. And things went so bad in the Ministry that the staff association sent a representation to the late Prime Minister and the Minister itself The Directorate General, Doordarshan on February 24 wrote a letter to the staff association, where, more or less, they had accepted that these things were happening and promised that they would take corrective measures. So, you give answers that will Carry credibility in the country.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : For the story that was published by the newspaper, we issued a contradiction and they had published it. As far as individual cases, which he has raised, are concerned, except one for which I will like to take time to get information, for others I am in a position to let the House know the exact information.

As far as Coimbatore is concerned, it is incorrect to say that the LPT was shifted. No shifting took place. As far as Bhopal is concerned, there was the problem of audio. The vision was clear but they were not getting the voice. I do not want to hide anything from the House. We wrote

to the manufacture. Some components were purchased and they were replaced. As far as salaries are concerned, as I have stated, from six places we had got complaints and remedial action was taken immediately. Immediately the nearest AIR Station was directed to pay the salary. At these places salaries were paid late because no Station Engineer was posted there or reached the place and therefore, there was some delay. Now, there is no complaint of salary being not paid.

The staff faces two problems. I am very well aware of that and I am trying to do something. One is about the accommodation, because some areas are very remote and there no accommodation is available. My predecessor had written to various Chief Ministers to help us in this matter. The other problem is that we have not been able to appoint one category of engineers i.e. Assit. Engineers because there was a dispute between degree holders and diploma holders. The matter had gone to the court. Now, we have revised the rules. We have sent them to the UPSC for approval. Once the approval comes, we will appoint them.

**SHRI G.G. SWELL :** What about the manhandling of an engineer at Bhatinda ?

**SHRI V.N. GADGIL :** About that manhandling case I would like to get the information. The technical advice given to me is that the LPT at Bhatinda operates at Channel 12. The 10 KW transmitter at Jullundur operates at Channel 9. The transmitter at Lahore is at Channel 5. Technically speaking these channels are so wide apart that there is no possibility of interference in programmes from Jullundur or from Lahore or Bhatinda by LPT at Bhatinda.

**SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN :** I am happy that my esteemed friend, the Minister, is very conscious of the problems faced by the staff. But I can tell him - I am sure he will believe me when I say so - that I have received quite a few letters from the staff members about lack of facilities in the respective LPT units. I am sure, the Minister is aware that considering their meagre salary, they cannot afford to stay even in smaller hotels and lodging houses for days and months - together with problems of their family, school of their children, etc.

Will the Minister assure the House that he will personally attend to this problem and appoint a study team immediately to look into the organisational structure and problems including staffing pattern and physical facilities ?

**SHRI V.N. GADGIL :** I agree with the hon. Member that the staff have the genuine problem of housing, particularly in some remote areas where houses are not available. I do not think a study team is necessary. I myself will be the study team and attend to the problem.

**SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY :** The Bharat Electronics Corporation is to be commended for the marvellous job it has done for manufacturing LPT as well as HPT with indigenous technology. I would like to put a question about my constituency. The hon. Minister is well aware that the Government of India has declared Dharmapuri as a backward district. This district is surrounded by three transmitters - one at Vellore, another at Salem and third one at Bangalore. But none of those covers this area. I have written so many letters to the Minister for which I am getting the usual reply. I think, Mr. Deputy-Speaker will support me because he also hails from the same area. So, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he is going to set up a Low Power Transmission Relay Station or a High Power Transmission Centre in Dharmapuri district and secondly, the High Power Transmission work at Kodaikanal is also going very slowly and that should be expedited. This is my categorical question on which I would like to get answer from the hon. Minister.

**SHRI V.N. GADGIL :** As regards part (b) of his question, I shall try to expedite. As for as the setting up of LPT or HPT at his particular place is concerned, let me be very frank. I get so many claims and naturally every M.P. wants the centre to be set up in his own constituency. But we decide on certain criteria and the Seventh Plan proposals are being finalised. So, at this stage I cannot say whether X will have it or Y will have it. We will go by the criteria the standards we have adopted.

**SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY :** What are the criteria, I would like to know.

MR. SPEAKER : I can solve your problem. What is available to the whole of India. That is all

#### Sale of Subsidised Foodgrains

\*62. SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether sales of subsidised foodgrains have declined leading to large carry over of stocks (News Time, dated 4 February, 1985) and if so, details thereof;

(b) whether slackness in sales is due to high prices and poor quality of grains marketed;

(c) whether Government have any plans to streamline Food Corporation of India and Central Warehousing Corporation in order to reduce losses in storage at all points; and

(d) details of total losses during the last three years in terms of percentage and finance involved ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The performance of Food Corporation of India and Central Warehousing Corporation in this regard is kept constantly under review by the Government.

(d) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

#### Statement

(a) Offtake of foodgrains from the Central Pool in the year 1984 was 12.09 million tonnes as against 14.66 million tonnes during 1983. The stock in the Central Pool was about 17.62 million tonnes on 1st January, 1985 as against 12.09 million tonnes on the corresponding date last year.

(b) The total shortages of foodgrains in terms of value and percentage suffered by the Food Corporation of India on the

total volume of operations (purchase and sale) during the last three years have been as under :

Year	Value (Rs. in crores)	percent- age
1981-82	115.91	2.28
1982-83	143.60	2.37
1983-84	140.65	2.11

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has given the reply for part (b) of the question as a categorical 'No'. But we have our experience...

(Interruptions)

MR SPEAKER : Did you want some other type of 'no' Sir ?

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Our experience regarding the supply of rice to the fair price shops is that it is erratic and the dealer is not getting adequate quantity of rice at a time to be given to the whole village. So, I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will ascertain the facts again and take necessary steps to see that the subsidised foodgrains are supplied in adequate quantity at a time to each village ?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Sir, on the one hand the hon. Member has stated that the sales have come down and on the other hand he is asking for larger quantities to be allocated. I cannot understand this.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : We are not asking for higher quantity. We are asking for the supply of adequate quantity that is expected to be distributed in a village.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : You want the quantities to be allocated adequately according to the demand but part (b) of your question is whether slackness in sales is due to high prices and poor quality of grains marketed. I have said that the reduction in sales is not on that account. Nor is it on account of poor quality because the quality is expected to be ensured by the State agencies and the depot holders. When the lift foodgrains from the FCI