

## RAJYA SABHA

Monday, the 4th August, 1980/the 13th  
Sraavna, 1902 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, Mr.  
Chairman in the Chair.

### MEMBERS SWORN

1. Shri Sultan Singh (Haryana)
2. Shri Sushil Chand Mohunta  
(Haryana)
3. Prof. N. M. Kamble (Maharashtra)

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### AIR Correspondents on foreign assignments

\*161. SHRI S. K. VAISHAM-PAYEN:  
Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND  
BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of All India Radio  
Correspondents on foreign assignments and  
the names of countries where they are posted;

(b) the facilities extended to these  
Correspondents;

(c) the amount of foreign allowance  
granted to each one of these correspondents  
and how does it compare with these of our  
Embassy staff of similar status posted in that  
country; and

(d) whether it is a fact that some  
correspondents have to furnish a resident  
permit every month; if so, what are the  
reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION  
AND BROADCASTING AND SUPPLY  
AND REHABILITATION (SHRI V. P.  
SATHI): (a) All India Radio has four Special  
Correspondents posted at Teheran (Iran),  
Cairo (Egypt), Hong Kong and Dacca  
(Bangladesh).

(b) and (c). The information is given in  
the attached statement.

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(d) The Special Correspondent posted at  
Teheran did face some difficulty initially in  
obtaining the resident permit, in view of the  
overall disturbed conditions obtaining there at  
that time. This was, however, sorted out later  
on with the assistance of Ministry of External  
Affairs and our Embassy in Tehran.

### Statement

(b) In addition to their own grade pay, as  
admissible from time to time, the Special  
Correspondents are extended the following  
facilities: —

(i) Foreign allowance as admissible to  
non-IFS deputa-tionists.

(ii) Additional foreign allowanca in lieu  
of Income Tax.

(Hi) Conveyance allowance for tour  
within s>hort distance at the place  
of posting.

(iv) Entertainment allowance.

(v) Free furnished residential ac-  
commodation.

(vi) Office and electronic equipment and  
cards \*or fU<sup>in</sup>S messages by telex or  
cable.

(c) The Special Correspondents are equated  
with First Secretary or Second Secretary of  
the Indian Missions in the concerned country,  
depending upon their pay scale, for the  
purpose of payment of foreign allowance. The  
amount of foreign allowance is granted as  
under: —

(i) Special Correspondent at Teheran      Rs.  
5,410 p.ra.

(ii) Special Correspondent at Cairo      Rs.  
3,430 p.m.

(Hi) Special Correspondent  
at Hong Kong      Rs. 4,050 p.rm.

(iv) Special Correspondent  
at Dacca      Rs. 1,030 p.m.

BuiJSDDpDO^a

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: Sir, in reply to my question (b), the Minister has stated that they are being provided with office. May I know from him whether these special correspondents are also given the facility of having assistants? And what provision has been made for salaries, etc. so far as the assistance are concerned? This is number one.

Secondly, if these special correspondents have to go out for obtaining information or for covering certain programmes in that particular country, are they given travelling allowance also?

SHRI V. P. SATHE: Sir, if my friend, the hon. Member, would kindly read the Annexure, he would see that I have supplied, along with the question, all the information which he wants. Sir, if I may be allowed to read out for him . . .

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: I have read the statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a question between short distances and long distances.

SHRI V. P. SATHE: Sir, allowances are given. He is provided with an allowance for conveyance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For short distances. I remember, your answer was for short distances.

SHRI V. P. SATHE: Sir, for long distances he has probably to manage with the other allowances that he is given.

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: Sir, in reply to part (d) of the Question the hon. Minister has referred to certain difficulties being faced by the Special Correspondent at Teheran and those difficulties he has informed this House, have been removed. Should we take it that at other places there are no difficulties so far as resident permits are concerned?

SHRI V. P. SATHE: Sir, at other places we have no information of any difficulty.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister whether these correspondents are permanently stationed or whether they are stationed for some duration or period and whether they are by rotation? Secondly, is there any proposal to post more correspondents in different parts of the world?

SHRI V. P. SATHE: Sir, the correspondents are posted and there is no fixed tenure till they are changed. That is how it is done. Secondly, Sir, we have not any proposal for opening more offices abroad in other places.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister the reasons for stationing AIR correspondents in foreign countries? We find from his reply that only in West Asian and South-East Asian countries four correspondents have been appointed but they are not certainly places of much importance considering other places like Moscow, Washington and London. May I know what is the criterion that the Government has laid down for appointing correspondents in foreign countries?

SHRI V. P. SATHE: Sir, the Criterion is that from those areas where we do not have access to normal sources of information there we try to post our correspondents so that we get information about those parts *api* that is how you will find our correspondents in these places. But from those areas where we have other services available, we do not put additional correspondents.

SHRI NARASINGHA PRASAD NAINDA: Sir, May I know . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have had one from your party.

SHRI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY: In the Question Hour also do you follow that principle?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I cannot permit every Member from every Party to put questions. I want to have a well-balanced approach. Yes, Mr. Shahabuddin.

SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Sir, I presume that the AIR correspondents stationed in these four places do not cover just the country of their posting, but the entire region and, as such, how far will it be correct to say that India does not have any other regular sources of information in those regions of the world? Are any other news agencies, Indian or foreign, located in those countries, or are these countries members of the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool, which give us access to exchange of information? So, it is in that sense that I would like to understand the usefulness and the purpose served by the stationing of these AIR correspondents abroad.

SHRI V. P. SATHE: Sir, the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool has not yet become functional and operative. Therefore, it was at that point that in these regions from where we did not have other news agencies that we thought that we should have our own correspondents to get proper information; for example, from Arabic countries, and so we posted a person in Cairo; from the eastern region, and therefore we posted a man in Hong Kong, and for obvious reasons also in Teheran and in Dacca. These four places will be very obvious. Well they are for regions.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : हमारे जो निकटवर्ती देश हैं, पाकिस्तान, सीलोन, बर्मा आदि, इनमें आल इंडिया रेडियो के कारेस-पोन्डेस नहीं हैं। क्यों नहीं हैं? अभी आपने पी० टी० आई०, यू० एन० आई०, हिन्दुस्तान समाचार और समाचार भारती, इन चारों न्यूज एजेंसीज को यह आश्वासन दिया है कि निकटवर्ती देशों में वे अपने कारेसपोन्डेस रखें और आप अपने कारेसपोन्डेस शायद वहां नहीं रखेंगे, तो इस नीति के पीछे क्या कारण हैं?

एक माननीय सदस्य : रहस्य क्या है?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : रहस्य नहीं, कारण क्या है?

श्री बी० पी० साठे : जहां न्यूज एजेंसीज, यू० एन० आई०, पी० टी० आई० के लोग हैं, जैसे पाकिस्तान में या अन्य जगहों पर, वहां ए० आई० आर० के अलग कारेसपोन्डेस रखने की आवश्यकता नहीं और जैसा मैंने कहा कि पहले जब न्यूज एजेंसी कारेस-पोन्डेस बहुत स्थानों में नहीं थे उस वक्त हमने यह सोचा था कि कारेसपोन्डेस भेजे जायं, इसमें कोई कान्फ्लिक्ट नहीं है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think, we will go "on to the next question. (Interruptions). I cannot ask everybody.

#### Clearance of the Silent Valley Project

\*162. SHRI K. C. SEBASTIAN: † SHRI S. KUMARAN:

Will the Minister of ENERGY AND COAL be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 55 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 9th June, 1980 and state:

(a) whether the Central Government have taken any final decision on the request of the Government of Kerala for clearing its Silent Valley Project; and

(b) if not, by when a final decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN): (j>) and (b). In view of the serious reservations expressed by the environmentalists and ecologists al) over the world at the possible destruction of the Silent Valley forest, the Kerala Government were advised to stop further work on the project in order that the ecological aspects be studied fully. The preliminary reports submitted recently

f The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri K. C. Sebastian.