

[8 August, 2005]

RAJYA SABHA

"प्रदेश में जो पिछड़ी जाति की सूची में शामिल नहीं है तो क्या उनको शामिल करने के लिए केन्द्र सरकार का कोई निर्देश होगा? सभापति महोदय, मेरा B पार्ट है कि आज भी तमाम ऐसी पिछड़ी जातियां हैं ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : वह क्वेश्चन इसमें नहीं है। इस क्वेश्चन को आप पढ़िए। आपका यह सप्लीमेंटरी इसके purview में नहीं आता है। ...(व्यवधान)... अलग से क्वेश्चन करिए।

श्री दारा सिंह चौहान : सर, यह सही है कि पिछड़ी जातियां ...(व्यवधान)... तमाम ऐसी कई जातियां हैं और किसी — किसी प्रदेश में जो अर्ध — पिछड़ी जातियां में शामिल हैं, जिनकी आर्थिक और सामाजिक स्थिति आज भी बहुत ही दयनीय है और प्रदेश से अनुसूचित जाति में शामिल होने का जो प्रस्ताव केन्द्र को आया है, तो क्या मंत्री महोदय बताने की कृपा करेंगी कि जो प्रस्ताव प्राप्त हुआ है, उन पिछड़ी जाति के लोगो ने जो अनुसूची में शामिल होने का आवेदन किया है तो क्या अनुसूचित जाति में शामिल होने का निर्देश जारी करेंगे और न होने का कारण क्या है?

श्री सभापति : ठीक है। Next Question 205.  (Intervptions)...

श्री दारा सिंह चौहान : सर, हमारे प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं आया।

श्री सभापति : आप इस क्वेश्चन को पढ़ लीजिए फिर आपको अपने आप उत्तर मालूम हो जाएगा।

FM Radio Policy Phase-II

*205. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government implemented the policy of Phase-II of FM radio;

(b) if so, the number of the cities brought under the new phase;

(c) the number of frequencies of 1st Phase which have been activated and the reasons, if any, for the unsustainability thereof; and

(d) whether Government have permitted the private radios to broadcast news and other current affairs programmes?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Government has notified a policy for the expansion of FM Radio (Phase-II) through private sector, which provides for setting up of FM radio stations in 90 cities.

(c) A total of 22 private FM channels were operationalised in Phase-I. One of them has been closed down since 29.4.2004. The FM operators had cited high licence fee as one of the reasons for unsustainability of their operations.

(d) No, Sir.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Sir, my first supplementary is related to the statement which is being laid before this House. It is regarding the policy for the expansion of FM Radio (Phase-II) through the private sector. Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister by opening this FM Radio channel to the private sector whether the Government will insist on the policy that news broadcasting shall not be allowed through the private FM channels. Secondly, will the same company be allowed to have more than one FM channel in the same city? Thirdly, is there any restriction on the multinational corporation to have their shareholding in this FM station sold to this company?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, the hon. Member has asked three questions. First, in regard to news, our policy is not to permit news. We have finalised the policy package. It has been okayed by the Cabinet. We are going to notify it very shortly.

As for the multiple channels, I must say that no company can have more than one channel in any city. So, We are not contemplating any system under which any company can have more than one channel. We are opposed to the policy of multiple channels for a single company.

As for MNCs, Sir, MNCs can have equity by way of FDI or FII only upto 20 per cent. Therefore, all the companies will be completely Indian companies. Indian companies will have equity upto 80 percent.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Sir, I am fully satisfied with the answer of the hon. Minister. Another supplementary that I would like to know from the hon. Minister is that most of the FM radio stations, or this All India Radio, which are being governed by the Government, are having

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lack of programme staff. Therefore, they are not able to function properly. For example, Manjari FM Radio station, which is constructed by the ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no need of any background.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Sir, it is a very specific question. Sir, Rs. 2.5 crore has been spent, but so far the station has not yet been commissioned only because of the reason that they are not having programme staff. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the programme staff would be provided so as to commission this FM radio station on which construction is already complete.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: I will write to the concerned Minister about the particular station. But, Sir, I admit that in Prasar Bharati, we have a huge problem in regard to staff inadequacy. Prasar Bharati needs not only my support; it needs the support of the entire House. I take this question as an expression of support.

% SHRI M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI: Through you, Sir, I would like to know two points from the hon. Minister. Throughout the world, there is a growing tendency among the people to listen to radio. It is said that the explosion of TV viewing is going to end. That signal is clear in many parts of the world. In our own country, people are more inclined towards radio. When compared with TV, the radio has never been a weapon of moral decay, but with regard to TV, it is creating many negative results among the young generation and even in our House, a discussion is going to take place on this subject. So, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government and the hon. Minister would take note of the situation and utilise the situation favourably. Sir, second point is regarding Manjari FM Radio station. I would like to have a categorical reply from the hon. Minister. Everything is ready in respect of Manjari Radio station; only commissioning is to take place. People are waiting. That is a symbol of aspirations of the people of the area.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I agree with the hon. Member about the scope of a radio revolution in the country. We are planning to have as many as 336 radio stations in the country in as many as 90 cities. We are providing collocation facilities. Therefore, radio's future is bright. And, I agree also with the Member that radio is getting revived all over the world. Radio has many advantages. It is a friendly companion. I agree

with him. It is non-invasive. It could also be culture friendly. As for Manjari, I can only say that I will try to provide the stats.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज : माननीय सभापति महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने अपने उत्तर में कहा है- "FM operators had cited high licence fee as one of the reasons for not operationalising their operations." तो मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगी कि जो आपने 90 शहरों में और एफएम के विस्तार की नई नीति बनाई है चरण — दो की, फेज — टू की, क्या उसमें आपने लाइसेंस फी को ही आधार रखा है या रेवेन्यू शेयरिंग को आधार कर दिया है?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, during the first phase, the entrepreneurs did not know better nor did the Government know any better. That experience represents a learning curve both for the Government and the entrepreneurs. In the second phase, having learnt from the experience, we have gone in for revenue sharing formula.

Sushmaji, as former Minister of Information and Broadcasting, should know this and this, we think, is going to encourage the revolutionary growth of radio in this country.

DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Sir, through you, I would like to ask me hon. Minister as to what is the rationale for discriminating against FM radio channels in the matter of news broadcasts. When every month a new TV news channel is being started, private operators are starting TV news channels, don't you think by excluding news and current affairs from the sphere of private radio, you are discriminating against radio and in the sense helping the TV operators, while the radio operators are going to suffer on account of this policy?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I am not discriminating in favour of TV operators, Chandanji is a leading media expert. He knows that those companies, which are running TV channels and newspapers, are also getting into radio. Therefore, there is a need to look at the monopoly trend in the news sector. It was this concern that has withheld us from allowing the private radio to have news channels at the moment.

*206. [The questioners Shri Motilal Vora and Shri Janardan Dwivedi were absent. For answer *vide* page 40 *infra*.]

Irregularities in Mid-Day Meal Scheme

*207. **DR. NARAYAN SINGH MANAKLAO:** Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: