

Report on the meeting with Shri Prakash Javdekar, the Hon. Minister of I&B

Shri P. Venugopal, State Secretary (Kerala) ARTEE met Shri Prakash Javdekar Hon. Minister for I&B on 20th June during his visit to Kerala and apprised him of the various problems faced by All India Radio & Doordarshan and its employees.

He demanded that AIR&DD should be considered as the CIVIL DEFENCE MECHANISM of the Nation (as the Defence and Police) that keeps the Culture of India intact in the era of cultural invasion. AIR & DD have been the only media institution that keeps the renowned culture of India to keep the nation united. He pointed out that such an arrangement would certainly end the still unsolved issue of whether Prasar Bharati should be profit oriented or service oriented and would certainly end most of the problems related to the administration, pay and allowances and welfare. Many welfare issues are still unsolved even after the verdicts from the Hon. Supreme Court of India. There has been no serious effort to solve the various issues of the Subordinate Engg. Staff for the past 20 to 30 years.

He proposed various methods to strengthen the Public Broadcaster like the effective use of AIR & DD as a SOFT POWER RESOURCE CENTRE to create a positive image of India and its Nationality throughout the world, strengthening and modernising the Terrestrial transmission using the mobile compatible DVB2 technology, strengthening the DD DTH by bringing more than 300 channels into its umbrella and FM Transmission of AIR. It is true that the global media deliberately projects a wrong image of our nation as a country of poverty and superstitions without showing the huge development achieved by this great nation. AIR and DD can be used effectively to dispel this notion. This image building would create a better acceptance overseas to its citizens and leaders. Also Air & DD will be indispensable in the process of Nation Building through this. Otherwise, it may be reduced to yet another satellite channel.

He submitted a memorandum on all the issues related to the problems faced by the subordinate Engg. Staff from Helper to Assistant Engineer and sought the strong intervention. The meeting of ARTEE Central leadership with the minister was cancelled due to the sad demise of Shri Gopinath Munde.

The minister responded favorably to these proposals and reiterated his commitment to strengthen AIR & DD. He told that he will certainly look into the various issues and suggestions. He also told that a project to enhance the

channel capacity of DD DTH to 300 channels is on the anvil and would certainly speed up the work.

Later ARTEE delegation had a very effective meeting with Shri P.K. Krishnadas, All India Secretary of BJP and discussed various long pending issues of the Sub-ordinate Engg. Staff. They brought to his notice that policy paralysis and deliberate attempts to favor private players have reduced the status of the Public Broadcaster and at the same time deliberate attempts are made to deny genuine demands of the subordinate engineering staff even after favorable rulings from the Supreme Court Of India. They praised him of the problems related to the pay and cadres of Subordinate Engineering staff. They requested his support in this. He assured all his assistance and would take up the matter further.

K. Zubair Asst. Secretary, Publicity (SZ), K.K. Ajithkumar Unit Secretary AIR Kochi, R.Sunilkumar former Unit Secretary AIR Thrissur, V.N. Harilal former Coordinator DMC Thrissur and B. Jayakrishnan former Publicity Secretary (Kerala) were part of the delegation. Prominent leaders of BJP, including Shri P Krishna Das, Shri A.N. Radhakrishnan, Shri K. Surendran and Shri Umakanthan have accompanied the minister.

ARTEE has the great tradition of working for the welfare of members. Continuing this tradition the State Secretary took up the issue of Compassionate appointment for the wife of Late Shri V A Khader, EA who died while he was on duty at AIR Kavaratti. He took brother of late Shri Khader along with him and submitted all relevant documents. BJP leaders assured to take up the matter. Congratulations to the Honorable President, ARTEE for earnestly pursuing the matter.

The meeting was very successful as we were able to create a positive image of ARTEE as it was the first meeting of ARTEE with the minister.

The State Committee thanks ARTEE Central Committee and SZ committee for the tremendous support and for providing all necessary documents and directions

P.Venugopal
State Secretary, Kerala