

ASSOCIATION OF RADIO & TELEVISION ENGINEERING EMPLOYEES



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Largest Employee Welfare Association of Electronic Media in India

Web Site : www.arteeindia.org



Golden Jubilee Year

CCS(RSA) Re Verification Under Process

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ARTEE/P/159/10/2017

03/11/2017

Ref. No.

Date.....

Madam Smriti Zubin Irani,
Hon'ble Minister, Information and Broadcasting,
5th Floor, Shastri Bhawan,
New Delhi – 110001

Subject : Our Concern with respect to the decision taken by Prasar Bharati to close 750+ LPTs to curtail the expenditure.

Reference : Our letter ARTEE/P/181/10/2016 dated 17-10-2016 expressing our concern about LPT Closure in East Zone vide letter dated 03/10/2016. (enclosed).

Reference : Our Resentment on DG DD letter 3(2)(1)/EZ/EII/2014 Dated 16.06.2014 expressing our concern about LPT Closure in East Zone in 2014.(enclosed).

Reference : Resentment about decision of Closure of LPTs and DMC and Shifting of staff from Doordarshan to Akashwani. (enclosed)

Respected Madam,

With warm regards, through this letter, we wish to convey our concerns about Prasar Bharati's decision to close many of its LPTs/DMCs of Terrestrial Network of DD.

Madam, we wish to inform you that we are the largest Employee Welfare Association of AIR/DD under Prasar Bharati and Affiliated to Bhartiyye Majdoor Sangh, the largest CTUO of the Country. Currently Re-Verification of Membership is under process.

We want to remind your high office, that we have been opposing the closure since 2007, when Deptt wanted to close two LPTs, Kalna and Ranaghat in EZ. We expressed our resentment in 2014 also through the above mentioned letter on about closer of LPTs of Madhepura, Simribakhtiarapur, Supaul, Khagaria, Kalna, Ranaghat and Mednipur in West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand.

[Signature]
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At that time also we suggested the following :

[I]. We agree that these LPTs are falling under the coverage of various HPTs but we want to reiterate our stand that instead of closing down, the transmission of Regional Channels may be relayed on these LPTs which shall give an added advantage to the viewers of Regional languages.

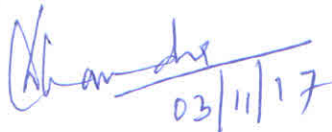
[II]. As Hon'ble MIB and Prasar Bharati unveiled multiple times that Prasar Bharati is planning to utilize the infrastructure of LPTs for installing FM. If these LPTs are closed, this infrastructure will start converting into Junk yard and shall be of no use when required for FM. In such case PB has to develop an entirely new infrastructure which will require more of expenditure compared to what is currently required to run these LPTs and relaying Regional Program. Pl. note that these lands were allotted for Broadcasting purposes and can not be engaged for any other purposes. Once the transmission Activities are stopped these lands will go back to various original owners.

[III]. The closure shall cause mass scale disturbance and transfers of staff which will again incur expenditure of transfer related allowances to Prasar Bharati. A debt ridden Prasar Bharati shall avoid huge expenditure.

[IV]. For a country like ours with diverse culture, terrain and climates it is essential to have an alternate system of Transmission in case Satellite transmission fails. These LPTs are catering to this requirement. In case of Flood or earthquake, these LPTs have served important purpose of making the transmission available to the Masses and providing an alternate communication channel to residents of disaster effected areas, many times. This has proved during many cyclones and Tsunamis

[V]. *We are grateful to our Hon'ble Prime Minister for making use of this power and reach of the Public Broadcaster through Man Ki Baat.*

[VI]. As per our information, no other country whether it is developing or developed has closed its terrestrial transmission. It is pertinent to note that Central TV China (CCTV) is strategically maintaining its terrestrial Network which is largest in the world.


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[VII]. The main reason of decline in viewership is the content quality . We are of the opinion that DD should focus on improvement of the content. As per the latest reports, after the verdict of Hon'ble Supreme Court, which restricted the sharing of the feed of the Cricket Matches via DTH platform as the feed was meant for transmission on Terrestrial Network only, many people watched the matches through the signals of terrestrial network(LPT/HPT). It establishes the fact that if we cater the need of viewers they will watch it on our terrestrial network or DTH and vice versa.

[VIII]. If we talk about decline in Revenue, DD has a history of disastrous decisions in past like withdrawal of the time slot(golden hours) allotted to channel 9 of Australia and closure of its most popular channel DD Metro which was running at no. 1 position in TRP at that time. No other Organization will take such a suicidal decision to close its most popular and profitable Channel.

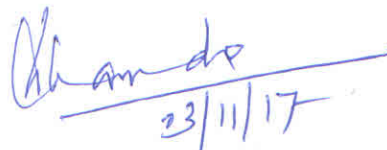
[IX]. The LPTs which have not crossed its shelf life i.e. 14 yrs should not be closed.

[X]. We are very well aware of the fact that our country is surrounded by the unfriendly neighbours on North east and Western Borders. We are suffering from cross border terrorism and LWE Activities in many Areas. Many of the DD transmitters are situated in the sensitive border areas like Poonch, Rajouri, Kargil, Gangtok, Tawang, Tibet etc. where the strong signal of our neighbouring countries are interfering in our territories. Our Transmitters act as weapons for our Media War in those Areas.

[XI]. We opine that instead of closing the Terrestrial Network, it should be converted into Digital Terrestrial Transmission network through our Digital India Program as guided by the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

As per our information, Prasar Bharati took a decision to close around 769 Transmitters as they have crossed its shelf life without performing a proper detailed study. As per our information the Engineering wing is also not taken into confidence. The decision was taken in PB Board Meeting in Sep 2017.

So in the light of above mentioned facts, we request you for the following :


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[1]. Not to close these transmitters and utilise the infrastructure to transmit regional channels.

[2]. Convert these transmitters into DTT transmitters so that multiple channels may be transmitted through these transmitters.

[3]. Enabling transmission even without internet on Mobile Phones through a dongle.

[4]. Utilize LPT infrastructure to install FM transmitters and adjust the staff in FM setup.

[5]. Not to take any decision to cause mass scale displacement of staff as it will cause heavy financial burden of transfer related allowances.

We sincerely request to consider above mentioned suggestions before taking any decision to avoid hardships to the staff. We also request you to grant us a meeting to discuss this sensitive issue and oblige.

Thanking you,
Yours faithfully,



03/11/17
Umesh Chandra,
President, ARTEE
9871765714,
umsharma01@gmail.com

Enclosed as above.


Umesh Chandra, 03/11/17

Cc for information to :

- [1]. Hon'ble Secy. (I&B), 6th Floor, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001
- [2]. Chief Executive Officer, Prasar Bharati, New Delhi-110001
- [3]. Director General, All India Radio, New Delhi-110001
- [4]. Director General, Doordarshan, New Delhi - 110001
- [5]. Office Copy.