

ASSOCIATION OF RADIO & TELEVISION ENGINEERING EMPLOYEES



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Largest Employee Welfare Association of Electronic Media in India

Web Site : www.arteeindia.org



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Date 01/02/2018

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Group Capt (Retd.), Sh. P.A.Naidu,
ADG(A), DG DD and Member Task Force for LPT Closure,
Doordarshan Directorate,
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Sh. O.K.Sharma, → 01/02/2018
ADG(E), DG DD and Member Task Force for LPT Closure,
Doordarshan Directorate,
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Sh. Rajiv Sinha,
DDG(E) and Convener Task Force for LPT Closure,
Doordarshan Directorate,
Copernicus Marg,
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Subject : Our Concern with respect to the decision taken by Prasar Bharati to close 272 LPTs as Order dated 12/01/2018 by DG Doordarshan.

Respected Sir,

With warm regards, through this letter, we wish to convey our concerns about closure of 272 VLPTs/LPTs by DG DD Order dated 12/1/18. This decision has shocked Employees.

Sir, 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 and Union Network International.

Significant developments on the issue after the release of letter of closure on 12/01/2018.

- (1). This Association met Sh. Jua Oram ji, Cabinet Minister Tribal Affairs on 17/01/2018, he expressed his un happiness and he assured to take it up with the deptt.
- (2). Around 10 Hon'ble MPs, many MLAs and Important personalities of society have written to Hon'ble MIB Madam Smriti Zubin Irani ji. More are expected to take up the issue. (copy of some of the enclosed)

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(3). The issue is being widely covered in Print Media in various languages. (copy of some coverages enclosed)

(4). Union Network International (UNI) , Global union has also raised this issue and written letters to Hon'ble MIB and other Authorities. (Copy enclosed).

(5). There is all around resentment in Employees and possibility of a democratic Agitation can not be ruled out as no discussion is done with representatives of Employees and no thought is given to Employee's concern before issuance of this letter.

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 closuer of LPTs of Madhepura, Simribakhtiarpur, Supaul, Khagaria, Kalna, Ranaghat and Mednipur in West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand.

Important Points which are to be decided before the closure

Point No. 1 : Closure on the name Digitization which is no where

It is pertinent to mention that these LPTs are being closed on the name of Digitization but out of 272 Stations no even a single station is figering in the list of stations to be digitized in new future. Further on Digitization, we want to mention the digitization of TV Centres in valious public Broadcasters.

Countries DTT Installed	Year of Launch	Current Status
Brazil	2007	ongoing
Canada	2012	completed
Colombia	2012	completed
Mexico	1997	completed
USA		completed
Australia	2001	completed
Japan	2003	completed
S. Korea	2001	completed
France	2005	completed
Germany	2002	completed
UK	1998	Completed.

As per a rough estimate, in all above countries digitization took place 5 to 10 years. Here in India, dismantling the technical infrastructure of world's second largest terrestrial net work without any alternative is like denying the right of common people for Cultural security. For the existence of democracy a strong cultural security mechanism. Is essential that system will provide informal life long education. Actually DD is one of the biggest school in the world.

We are in favor of that instead of closing the Terrestrial Network,it should be covered into Digital Terrestrial Transmission network through our Digital India Program as guided by the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

Point Number 2 : Mass scale displacement and transfers of Staff which involve huge expenditure :

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.

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Point Number 3 : No syncroization of FM expansion with the closure :

[III]. 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.

Point Number 4 : Violation of fundamental right of common people of India :

[IV]. For a country like ours with diverse culture, terraine and climates it is essential to have an alternate system of Transmission in case Satellite transmission fails. These LPTs are catering to this requirment. 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

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. The current decision is againts the policy to Govt. to reach upto the last man. 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.

So denying the viewing of Program of Public Broadcaster who can not afford DTH is breaching the rights of common man and againts the policy of present Govt.

Point No. 5 : Approval of Hon'ble Ministry of I & B

This terrestrial Network is the Asset Creation of Hon'ble Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. It is learnt that Approval of MIB is not obtained before taking the major policy decision of Closure of these Relay Centres.

Point No. 6 : How to Counter Media War of hostile neighbouring countries through their terrestrial Networks and issues related to security of the Nation.

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 neiphrouing countries are interfering in our teritories. Our Transmitters act as deterant and weapons in our Media War in those Areas.

There are language related problems with neighboring cuntries which are explained below :

Border with Pakistan and Transmission in Urdu and Punjabi Language :

We are having a long border with Pakistan and in our Areas like Punjab, J & K same languages like Punjabi and urdu are spoken and understood. Our terrestrial transmission counters their transmission in Punjabi and Urdu Language. If our Transmission is stopped, the transmission of Pakistan may succeed in infleuncing our Masses.

Border with Sri Lanka :

Similar is transmission in Tamil langauge which playes same role in Sri Lanka. If our terrestrial transmismitters are non existent our villagers will have no option but to listen the Transmission

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from Sri Lanka in Tamil. It is pertinent to mention that we have been troubled in past by Terrorism orginated from Sri Lanka.

Border with Bangladesh : The Bengali Language plays the same role as explained above about Urdu, Punjabi and Tamil.

Border with China, Nepal : Same issues exist with these borders also

Point No. 7 : Vague aruments of decline in Viewership and Revenue :

The main reason of decline in viewership is the content quality. We are of the opinion that DD should focus on imporvement 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.

When 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.

Point No. 8 : Non clarity of spectrum which will be free by this closure :

It is not clear that what will happen to the spectrum which will be freed by closure of these LPTs. If we surrender the spectrum then it will be difficult to get it back.

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

[1]. *Convert these transmitters into DTT transmitters Enablingreceiving Programme through a dongle even without internet on Mōbile Phones.Through this multiple channels may also be transmitted. Till then existing transmitters should not be closed.*

[2]. *Not to close these transmitters and utilise the infrastructure to transmit regional channels and to install FM Transmitters.*

[3]. *Not to take any decision to cause mass scale displacement of staff as it will cause heavy financial burden of transfer related allowances on already cash riden Prasar Bharati.*

[4]. *Not to surrunder frequency spectrum allocated for transmission from these LPTs.*

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 preferably with Task Force to discuss these sensitive issues.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

Umesh Chandra, President, ARTEE
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enclosed as above.

Umesh Chandra,

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