

"Promotion increases the efficiency of the public service and stagnation reduces the efficiency and makes service ineffective ."Supreme Court of India

FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROGRAMME PRODUCING STAFF OF ALL INDIA RADIO AND DOORDARSHAN – A FACTUAL PRESENTATION

- The major criticism or complaint on the National Broadcasters AIR/DD in the last 15 years is that they are not competing well with the private broadcasters due to broadcast of lacklustre programmes. In this context we would like to bring to your knowledge the following factors hampering the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service broadcasters namely All India Radio & Doordarshan. As like any organization both AIR & DD depends upon their work force to create the required output. But when the work force (programme staff) is shackled by the limitations of numbers and over work (as the following tabular column illustrates), they are left with no time to plan and execute creative and interesting programmes. They are left running from deadline to deadline be it flagship programmes, revenue targets, software programmes, compaign theme programmes, festivals & anniversary programmes and day-to-day programmes.

Programme Cadres	Sanctioned Strength as on 2005	In position	Vacancies
SAG - DD AIR	12 18	7 4	19
JAG - DD AIR	63 115	38 17	123
STS - DD AIR	133 262	57 76	262
JTS - DD AIR	187 262	- -	449
PEX	1624	926	698
Trex & Allied cadres	1841	1268	573
Total	4517	2393	2124

- The tabular column clearly and factually shows the indifferent attitude of the management to the extreme levels of shortage of staff being experienced in the programme cadres of the organization.
- In the last 16 years (i.e. from 1992) the sanctioned strength of programme staff (in the cadres of SAG, JAG, STS, JTS & PEX) has come down from 4968 to 4517 but during the same period 98 new AIR stations/ channels and 40 new Doordarshan Kendras/ PGF have come up without the sanction of any programme posts. Simultaneously the work load of programme staff has gone up with the introduction of new divisions/ services like Marketing, DCD, DTH, AIR news on phone, narrow casting, AIR on-line etc. The recommendations of the SIU and later the NPC reports have both recommended the increase in programme posts from the present strength.
- The setting of impossible marketing targets for stations, and imposition of the whole burden of achieving these targets and the entire nitty-gritty of handling the marketing and sales work on programme staff alone followed by continuous monitoring the unrelenting haranguing and questioning has been the height of the mindless situation going on for decades now. Needless to say the huge additional production and management work arising out of successful marketing and sales efforts at central, state and local levels also invariably falls on the hapless programme staff. Please note they have to carry out all these new time bound and high-pressure and often specialized tasks without any additional staff or infrastructural support whatsoever. At many stations the Programme Executives have been for years thanklessly carrying out the work of the Assistant Stations Director/Station Director as the posts have been lying vacant. How much broader can their shoulders extend? And Broadcasting, everyone knows is a high-pressure and high-stress vocation even in the most ordinary times
- There has been neither any Restructuring of cadre nor any new recruitment to fill the vacant programme posts during this period. Several programme staff are also affected by the Department's attitude of giving prospective effect to regularizations in spite of the incumbents having worked in the post for several years against a clear vacancy.
- The last Departmental Promotion committee for promotion to the cadre of Assistant Station Director (Junior time Scale/in IBPS) was held in 1995 and as on date there is no regular Assistant Station Director (JTS officer) in All India Radio & Doordarshan.

- In OA No. 243/2002 the Principal Bench of CAT, New Delhi on 29-1-2002 ordered the holding of all the Departmental Promotion Committee meetings within Four Months, which has not been done till date in the cadres of Assistant Station Director (JTS in IBPS) and Programme Executives.
- The Hon'ble CAT, New Delhi vide order dated 26-3-2004 was pleased to direct the department to undertake a fresh review of the last Departmental Promotion Committee meeting for the JTS production posts of the IBPS by considering the Programme Executive also within a period of 3 months. This is yet to take place.
- The unfairness of the whole career and professional situation in which the AIR & DD Programme Staff are tapped can be gauged from just random example. A post-Graduate in Agriculture Science joined AIR as Programme Executive (Gazetted-Group B) through UPSC selection in 1990. A batchmate at Post graduation of this person joined the Department of Agriculture of a state government in the same year at the entry level. The batchmate is now about to take up Director level position in the state government service having received some seven promotions in normal routine course. In stark contrast our colleague who joined All India Radio out of an idealist persuasion and fascination for broadcasting, continues to slog and rot as Programme Executive at the wonderful age of 44 years. And still there is no light visible at the end of the tunnel.
- The rules on convening of DPC issued by the DoPT vide its order No. 22011/9/98-Estt.(D) dated 14-12-2000 are very clear on the issue of holding DPCs ;

"All Ministries/Departments were also requested vide DO letter of even number, dated March 29,2000 of Secretary (Personnel) for strict compliance of the instructions so as to achieve the desired objectives of timely convening of DPCs/preparation of approved select panels within the prescribed time frame. Despite repeated communications to this effect, some of the Ministries/Departments are yet to implement these instructions, Non-adherence to the prescribed time frame is resulting in continued delay in convening DPCs. The UPSC has, on several occasions in the past, brought this not-so-satisfactory position to the notice of the Department of Personnel and Training. This is indeed a matter of serious concern for the Government. Hence all concerned authorities are once again counselled to ensure adherence to the Model Calendar which has been devised as a system improvement measure. In case of non-adherence to the prescribed time frame, steps should be taken to fix responsibility for the lapse in this regard."

- The frequent plea put forward by the department on non-availability of CRs is also not valid as the following DoPT rules clarify.

"In case any CR is lost & consequently missing, the benefit of Rule 6.2.1 para © from consolidated instructions on promotions could be taken. (Ref: G.I, Deptt. of Per.&Trg. OM NO. 22011/5/91-Estt.(D) dated the 27th March, 1997)"

"Where one or more CRs have not been written for any reason during the relevant period, the DPC should consider the CRs of the years preceding the period in question and if in any case even these are not available the DPC should take the CRs of the lower grade into account to complete the number of

CRs required to be considered. If this is also not possible, all the available CRs should be taken into account.”

- Moreover, by a communication from Prasar Bharati’s CEO office dated 11-6-2002 on the subject of filling up of vacancies, point No. 1(e) & 3(i) of the Swamy’s Manual on Establishment & Administration pertaining to “Restrictions on creation of posts/filling up of vacancies” is emphasized for necessary action. The points are 1(e) “Vacancies to be filled up purely by promotion in terms of the Recruitment Rules, provided the resultant vacancies in the lowest level of the cadre are not filled up during the period of the ban orders” and in Point 3 (i) “Vacancies both Plan and Non-Plan arising due to promotion, retirement or death, resignation, dismissal, removal or deputation may be filled up”
- The Supreme Court of India in a landmark judgments on promotions in service has observed that “Promotion increases the efficiency of the public service and stagnation reduces the efficiency and makes service ineffective.”

Taking into consideration all the above mentioned points we demand that all the sanctioned, vacant programme posts should be filled up immediately either by way of promotion or through statutorily constituted recruiting bodies as per constitutional norms.

- The demand for setting up of a cadre review committee with a time bound schedule of cadre review for the programme staff is a old demand that has been communicated by us on three earlier occasions (25-5-2008, 15-9-2008 and 3-10-2008). The Cabinet Secretary by a letter (DO No. 1-11-19/6/2008-CRD) dated 29-4-2008 had instructed all the departments to go in for cadre review. As a follow up to this, Prasar Bharati had constituted a cadre review committee for the engineering staff (order No. Misc-1/238/2007-PPC (pt.-1) dated 7-5-2008) and the administrative staff (on 24-7-2008). We demand that a cadre review committee with a definite time frame to do cadre review for the programme staff be put in place immediately.