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## **All India Radio**

Akashvani also known as All India Radio (AIR), officially known since 1957 as Akashvani (literary meaning "Voice from the Sky"), is the national public radio broadcaster of India and is a division of Prasar Bharati. It was established in 1936.

It is the sister service of Prasar Bharati's Doordarshan, an Indian television broadcaster. Headquartered in the Akashvani Bhavan building in New Delhi, it houses the Drama Section, the FM Section, and the National Service, and is also home to the Indian television station Doordarshan Kendra, (Delhi).

Akashvani is the largest radio network in the world, and one of the largest broadcasting organisations in the world in terms of the number of languages broadcast and the spectrum of socio-economic and cultural diversity it serves. AIR's home service comprises 420 stations located across the country, reaching nearly 92% of the country's area and 99.19% of the total population. originates programming in 23 languages and 179 dialects.

Akashvani is a Sanskrit word meaning 'celestial announcement' or 'voice from the sky/heaven'. In Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism, Akashvanis are often featured in stories as a medium of communication from heaven to mankind.

When the Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS) was renamed All India Radio, Rabindranath Tagore rechristened it as Akashvani, the voice that comes over from the skies, through a poem penned for the inauguration of Kolkata's shortwave service.

'Akashavani' was also used in the context of radio by M. V. Gopaldaswami in 1936 after setting up India's first private radio station in his residence, "Vittal Vihar" (about two hundred yards from AIR's current Mysore radio station). Akashvani was later given as All India Radio's on-air name in 1957; given its literal meaning in Sanskrit, it was believed to be a more than suitable name for a broadcaster.

## **History**

Broadcasting began in June 1923 during the British Raj with programmes by the Bombay Presidency Radio Club and other radio clubs. According to an agreement on 23 July 1927, the private Indian Broadcasting Company Ltd (IBC) was authorized to operate two radio stations: the Mumbai station which began on 23 July 1927, and the Kolkata station which followed on 26 August 1927. The company went into liquidation on 1 March 1930. The government took over the broadcasting facilities and began the Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS) on 1 April 1930 on an experimental basis for two years, and permanently in May 1932 it then went on to become All India Radio on 8 June 1936.

On 1 October 1939, the External Service began with a broadcast in Pashto. It was intended to counter radio propaganda from Germany directed at Afghanistan, Iran and Arab nations. 1939 also saw the opening of the Dhaka station of Eastern India, in what is now Bangladesh. This station catered and nurtured the pioneers of Bengali intellectuals. The foremost among them, Natyaguru Nurul Momen, became the trail-blazer of the talk-show in 1939. He wrote and directed the first modern radio-play for this station in 1942. When India became independent in 1947, the AIR network had only six stations (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Lucknow, and Tiruchirappalli). The three radio stations at Lahore, Peshawar and Dhaka remained in what became Pakistan after the division. The total number of radio sets in India at that time was about 275,000. On 3 October 1957, the Vividh Bharati Service was launched, to compete with Radio Ceylon. Television broadcasting began in Delhi in 1959 as part of AIR, but was split off from the radio network as Doordarshan on 1 April 1976.[9] FM broadcasting began on 23 July 1977 in Chennai, and expanded during the 1990s.

Deccan Radio (Nizam Radio 1932), the first radio station in Hyderabad State (now Hyderabad), went live on air on 3 February 1935. It was launched by Mir Osman Ali Khan the seventh Nizam of Hyderabad with a transmitting power of 200 Watts. On 1 April 1950, Deccan Radio was taken over by the Indian Government, and in 1956 it was merged with All India Radio (AIR). Since then, it has been known as AIR-Hyderabad (100 kW).