

Amateurs from around the world would have felt at home at the well attended and organised convention even though there were several peculiarities which made the event distinctly Indian. Before the inaugural address by the then FARSİ President, Saad Ali, there was an invocation dance in typical South Indian style. While the delicate aroma of curry from the nearby kitchen filled the air a beautiful sariclad lady performed a classical dance routine.

The graceful movements which originated countless centuries ago greatly contrasted with an adjoining display of the latest 20th century solid state VHF and HF transceivers. The display of Yaesu, Icom and Kenwood gear was the first time that commercial equipment had ever been on exhibition in India. Consequently the gear-laden stand of solid state equipment drew large crowds of 'prospective' purchasers.

There were other displays where prospective purchasers were actually making purchases, the most notable being the FARSİ publication stand which sold ARRL books, FARSİ publications and issues of *Radio*.

Displays of related electronic equipment also drew interest. The Jetking kit company sold a range of home electronic products ranging from a MW transistor radio kit for Rs105 to a top of the line speaker kit for Rs1200. The company also had a TV kit on display priced from Rs2500. (Bombay, along with seven other cities in the country, has a single channel of black and white TV transmission.)

Homebrew equipment

The delegates eagerly visited the commercial stands but were also interested in the display of homebrew equipment. Foremost in the homebrew department was a lineup of 2 metre equipment built by VU2ASH, Ashok from Gwalior. This dedicated electronics engineer works until 8pm, then comes home to spend another five or six hours developing VHF equipment. So far he has prototypes of a 50mW FM transmitter with VFO, an FM receiver, an AM receiver and a 1 watt FM transmitter. The Gwalior Amateur Club has benefited from his

efforts and a few amateurs in this North Indian city can be heard on 145.50 FM homebrew simplex. In 1982 VHF activity throughout India experienced a major boost when Yaesu supplied equipment at concessional prices.

The homebrew and commercial displays and various technical talks contributed to the Bombay convention's theme of *The Contribution of Radio Amateurs to the Fast Developing Technology of Communications*. What's more it showed that amateur radio in India is slowly becoming recognised for its merits. Reasonable achievements have been made over the past few years but there is more which can be done. In his concluding address former FARSİ President Ali set down five goals that the amateur movement should strive to meet in the next few years: availability of off-the-shelf equipment at reasonable prices; regular training classes by every club; frequent regional meetings, mini conventions and field days; an emergency net ready to operate at a moment's notice for every region; and 10,000 amateurs ready, willing and able to serve the emerging Indian nation. ●

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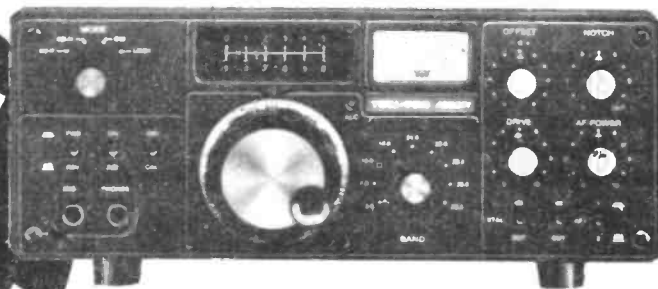
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