

Title: Discussion regarding functioning of Prasar Bharati.

16.05 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we will take up the discussion under Rule 193. I appeal to the hon. Members that we have to complete this discussion today itself.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (MIRYALGUDA): Today, once again, I rise to speak on Prasar Bharati, which has been paralysed in its functioning, more in sorrow than in anger because the functioning of Prasar Bharati has been subverted deliberately and malignantly and consistently. The BJP-led Government has given three I&B Ministers in less than two years, and they spoke in different voices. But may I also hasten to add that there was a cynical common pattern to all their actions in regard to Prasar Bharati.

When my good friend, Pramod Mahajanji, was the Minister of Information, I used to be quite comfortable with him because of his disarming political candour. He thought, that the Government must have its own channel now that there are private channels. I am not as comfortable with Shri Jaitley because he talks very sweetly about liberalism; I am afraid, he is no less a slippery customer.

Before I deal with the various blows that were so mercilessly dealt to Prasar Bharati by the BJP-led Government, may I go into the history of this Board? May I also deal with the first principles of democracy? The Charter of Canadian Corporation starts with the famous words, "The air belongs to all of us". It was Jawaharlal Nehru, way back in 1948, speaking in the Constituent Assembly, who desired that the All India Radio should, in due course, approximate to the BBC. At that time, we did not have Doordarshan.

There was a Committee headed by Chanda in 1960s, which recommended an autonomous corporation for All India Radio. After 1977, there was Verghese Committee Report, which also recommended an autonomous corporation for both All India Radio and Doordarshan. When the Congress came back in 1980, the Congress Government also appointed two Committees. One was Joshi Committee, the other was Parthasarathy Committee. One thing that is common to all these Committee reports was, each one of them recommended formation of an autonomous corporation. It was because of the consensus that had been evolved in the country over years and decades through so many expert committee reports that Parliament of India could pass the present Act, the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990 unanimously in both Houses.

Sir, the hon. Minister, who is a noted lawyer, is well aware of the historic judgement delivered by the Supreme Court in 1995. The Supreme Court, amongst other things, said:

"In the interest of ensuring plurality of opinions, the broadcasting media cannot be allowed to be under a monopoly of anyone -- be it the monopoly of Government or of an individual body or organisation. Government control, in effect, is not conducive to the free expression of contending viewpoints".

After this Supreme Court judgement, I do not think, anybody has an option but to confer optimal statutory autonomy on both Akashvani and Doordarshan.

Sir, I happened to become a Minister. I was there only for a few months. When I became a Minister, the first statement I made was that my job would be to render myself jobless. I do not think that our democracy is so backward to need the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. In fact, in no advanced country in the world do we have any Ministry called the Information and Broadcasting. I am really happy that my good friend, Shri Arun Jaitley, has been given another portfolio, namely, the Disinvestment. If he was unemployed, he would have kept meddling in All India Radio and Doordarshan. I hope, because of the additional portfolio, he would not be tempted to do that. Being an optimist, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should not be faulted for hoping against hope.

Sir, one charge that has been levelled against me is that I got the Prasar Bharati Board constituted towards the end of my tenure as a Minister. I would like to set the records straight. I made this point repeatedly but some people are unwilling to learn, therefore, I am obliged to repeat.

Sir, I became a Minister on May 1, and made all these statements. I notified the 1990 Act on 22nd July, 1997 and said that the Prasar Bharati Act would become operational from 15th of September, 1997. So, it was not a step taken overnight but it was a step taken after a due process. Then, an Ordinance was promulgated on 30th October, 1997. At that time, at least nobody in the world knew that the Jain Commission Report would be leaked and our Government would come under a cloud. The Ordinance was promulgated on 30th October, 1997. The Government wrote to the Chairman of the Selection Committee, namely the Vice-President, to go about the business of selecting persons. The hon. Minister knows full well that the selections made by the Selection Committee are final and binding on the Government. The Government has no role to play in the matter at all.

Sir, be that as it may. Then, the BJP led Government came to power at the Centre. What did it do? It wanted to get rid of Shri Gill. I am neither attached to Shri Gill nor do I contend that he was the only competent man. There may be other equally competent persons.

I cannot help but refer to the manner in which Shri Gill was removed. Before the Parliament was adjourned, for the first time in the history of free India, 124 Members of Rajya Sabha wrote a letter to the Prime Minister of India, with a copy to the President of India, that they would oppose this amendment. The Bill was not deliberately taken to Rajya Sabha. After Parliament was adjourned, they promulgated an ordinance.

There is a tendency to equate this ordinance with the ordinance I promulgated. When I promulgated the ordinance, because of the support lent by the Congress Party we had the support in both the Houses, I consulted the Congress Party's leader. Secondly, there is nothing wrong in promulgating an ordinance. But they did not produce it before the House. They may turn around and ask, "Did you produce?" I did not because I could not. I was not around to produce the ordinance before Parliament. But they were around. They promulgated the ordinance and threw out, the Chief Executive Officer, But, the I & B Minister never turned up in Parliament with the ordinance. This is a biggest fraud played on the Constitution, having regard to the manner in which Rajya Sabha was deliberately bypassed.

Okay, Shri Gill is not indispensable, but somebody else could have been appointed. Nobody has been appointed. Two years were completed. Two members of the Board had to be retired. I was told on April 1, 1999; subject to confirmation by the Minister (I am not supposed to know what is transpiring in his Ministry) that there was a notification to the effect that two of the six members of Prasar Bharati Board would be retired through a neutral process of drawing of lots. One, of course, was elevated as Governor. I do not know what happened to this notification. On one fine morning, two people were handpicked – Prof. Romilla Thapar and Shri Rajendra Yadav.

To call Prof. Romilla Thapar no more than a Leftist is to indulge in intellectual violence, analytical vulgarity and academic obscurity. Prof. Romilla Thapar, ironically, ten days before she was removed, was honoured with the Fellowship of the British Royal Academy, the highest honour the Great Britain can confer in the area of social sciences. The first Indian to receive this honour was Prof. Radhakrishnan. The other Indians who received this honour include such people like M.N. Srinivas, the founder of Indian sociology, who passed away recently and Prof. K.N. Raj, the doyen of Indian economists. Prof. Romilla Thapar is an internationally acclaimed historian. They heap humiliation on a person of this stature! They see red in every bush. They are practising McCarthyism. Shri Rajendra Yadav is nothing more than a Leftist for them. Okay, they are, of course, benighted leftists who need to be consigned to the dustbin of history because the blessed BJP is in power. What else can be done?

What else can be done? But what did they do with the other people? Prof. U.R. Rao has been found fit for only four-year term. Do we have a more eminent Space Scientist who had hands on experience with communications? Who had more to do with the INSAT than Prof. U.R. Rao? May I enlighten the Minister that Prof. U.R. Rao received the prestigious International Award from the Association of International Aeronautics for his magnum opus? He wrote on the social Applications of Space Technology. He was only given a four-year term!

Shri Abid Hussain who distinguished himself as a bureaucrat, as a diplomat, who is now serving as a rapporteur on the UN Human Rights Commission has been considered fit for only four-year term. Does it behove any Government inflict this kind of mortification on men of our eminence? They were, at least, kind enough to Shri Verghese. They gave him a six-year term but they kept one six-year vacancy unfilled deliberately. For whom, Sir?

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have a Prasar Bharati Board. What a phantom Board we have! We have an acting Director-General of Doordarshan, we have an acting Director-General of All India Radio, we have an acting Chief Executive Officer. Nothing against the present Chief Executive Officer. He is an excellent officer. But he is an Additional Secretary to the Government of India. That is my complaint. There is no Chairman. Shri Nikhil Chakraborty was also condemned as a Leftist though he was the doyen of Indian journalists, be that as it may, he passed away. Sir, they did not deem it fit to fill the vacancy of Chairman. They have not framed the rules so far under the Prasar Bharati Act. This is an act of deliberate omission. They are guilty of masterly inaction.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Government is not only willing to wound but willing to kill. But they are unable to do so because they do not have majority in the Rajya Sabha. If it could, it would have rolled back the Prasar Bharati into the Bay of Bengal. What are they instead? It is stifling. The infant is being stifled. If the infant is stifled in this manner, the growth of this institution would remain retarded.

Therefore, I said, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am speaking more with agony because there is no point in losing temper on people who cannot be credited with sensitivity. Now, our Minister came out with a new proposition that "there must be persons only drawn from the Media." It was said in the past, "The war is much too important to be left to the Generals. The Prasar Bharati is much too important to be left to the Media experts." There must be experts drawn from different disciplines to facilitate, what should I say, cross-fertilization of ideas. They must have people from different disciplines. It is never too late. Why I am saying so, why I am wasting my breath, because it is not too late to resurrect this body. And now, an orchestrated campaign has been unleashed to say that the Prasar Bharati Board has failed.

You never allowed it to function. It was never fully constituted. You have been trying to sabotage it from the word go and from the day one.

Shri Arun Jaitley, being a professional lawyer, is fond of his own professionalism. None is opposed to professionalism. But professionalism at what level? It may be there at the level of functioning but not at the level of the members of Prasar Bharati. I am happy to find Dr. Nitish Sengupta here who served a committee. He is also one of those who headed one Committee. I should say in fairness to him that he made many useful recommendations. I drew upon some of the recommendations. I am referring to those things when I promulgated an Ordinance. I hope our hon. Minister will prove my fears to be liars. In the name of professionalisation, he may try to indulge in saffronisation. That is my solid fear. I want to enquire with our non-BJP partners of NDA as to why none of them has been given HRD portfolio, Home Ministry or IB. Dear friends, please wake up and realise that none of you are considered fit for these portfolios. You cannot be trusted to carry on the Agenda.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Do you want us to learn just to cross over to Congress just as you have learnt to cross over to Congress? Are you asking everybody to go there or what? Do you want us to do just as what you have done?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Some interventions are treated with benign neglect. Our hon. Minister may say Prasar Bharati is on trial. Through you I would like to tell him that it is not Prasar Bharati which is on trial. It is the Minister who is on trial. It is you who are in the dock. I hope at least now he will rise to the collective call of the country and liberate the electronic media from the Government's stranglehold.

I can give examples galore when the Government intervened, not during his Ministry, but at the time of his predecessor. But I do not want to waste the time of the House. I am dealing with the principle. Therefore, I want the hon. Minister to rise to the occasion and see that this infant is allowed to grow at its natural pace and our hon. Minister should also realise that we have the largest network in the world. If you think the Government must have its own Channel, then you must have your own newspaper. You can start your own newspaper, but you will not find newspaper readers. Therefore, please recover from your ancient background because you are living in BC while we are moving into the third millennium. I hope through internet, you will be able to travel into third millennium along with all of us.

">DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONTAI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

"> Since Shri S. Jaipal Reddy referred to the Committee which I headed on Prasar Bharati, which happened to be the last of the many Committees on the subject, I would like to give a brief background. That Committee was set up when Shri P.A. Sangma was the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. I still remember the day when he called me to head that Committee. I said, 'Look, I am not a mediaperson. Why are you troubling me', to which he said, 'No, I want someone like you, a management expert, an administration expert to tell us where the Act has gone wrong."

"> Let me come to the background of 1990, till which time Doordarshan had a monopoly. That was why the question of autonomy became terribly important. The Verghese Committee and all the other Committees felt that since the Government had the uncontrolled power over news and current affairs; the political party in power could always take an unfair advantage of the complete control over Doordarshan and All India Radio. Therefore, autonomy was desirable. But by one of those paradoxes in history, Doordarshan lost that monopoly power almost before the ink was dried on the Prasar Bharati Act.

"> You will recall that the role that CNN played when the Kuwait-Iraq conflict erupted. The tremendous power wielded by satellite communication and the dish antenna was discovered for the first time. Then, all the other channels followed, both Indian and foreign.

">16.31 hours (Shri Basu Deb Acharia in the Chair)

"> Mr. Chairman, today, the Indian viewer is no longer tied down to the monopoly of Doordarshan at all. He has a tremendous amount of choice: BBC, CNN and many other Indian channels. In fact, one of my recommendations in that Committee was that it was pointless to stick to a position that we would not give permission for uplinking to these satellite channels. That was a short-term Committee and no Committee has produced so much in a report as that Committee did with such a low cost to the Government. Neither the Chairman nor the members took any honorarium or anything. They took only the travelling expenses.

"> After Shri P.A. Sangma came Shrimati Sushma Swaraj. She told me to galvanize the Committee again and submit a Report quickly. I was going to submit an Interim Report and then the Final Report. I was asked to submit the Final Report quickly. Later on, Shri C.M. Ibrahim became the Minister. He had very strong views on satellite channels. He said, 'Only over my dead body will the Indian Government permit uplinking facility to foreign channels.' I said, 'You can take a view there but can you prevent the Internet from coming in? What is the point in allowing the satellite channels to go on like free floating sovereign agencies without any control? It is much better to give them licence which will not only give the Government the power to put conditions for approval and for licence but also bring in a lot of foreign exchange to the coffers of the Government of India.' It was done but anyway today the autonomy is gone. Today, the Indian viewer is no longer tied down to the monopoly of Doordarshan. Therefore, the question of autonomy becomes less and less important. That is the background which I would like hon. Members to appreciate.

"> A lot of reference has been made to the BBC. The BBC also had the first channel only for the Government, to disseminate the Government's views. The BBC Charter also has a provision for the BBC to be given directives by the Government although after the Second World War that power has been exercised only once. During the Falkland Islands dispute, when the BBC was giving a lot of publicity to the sinking of an Argentinian cruiser by a British submarine, there was a lot of human angle to it and it showed how the British submarines were cruel to the Argentinians who were going down under the sea. At that time, the only directive which has been issued in half-a-century by the Government to the BBC was, 'Please do not show it too much.' But this was not done.

"> It is not so much whether there is a law but much depends on the traditions that we build. The various practices and the kind of healthy traditions that we build gradually are really what are going to govern. After that conflict in the Gulf, there has been a lot of political changes. Maybe, it may take some time for the Government to appreciate the reality. I hope, they will try to recast the Prasar Bharati Act taking into account the vastly changed and fast-changing situation.

"> I had referred to two processes of change. When my Committee was deliberating, there was nothing called DTH but basically it was only about dish antenna and all that. But shortly after the Report was submitted, DTH came into the picture and again complicated the matter.

Even now, the Government is not able to take a decision on how to treat some of these technological problems which are appearing.

Mr. Chairman, my good friend, Mr. Jaipal Reddy has mentioned about he being made into an accused and of arbitrariness and all that. Is that completely correct? It is true that when he announced that the Prasar Bharati Act would be brought into operation, there was the support of the Congress. But on the 17th or 18th of November 1997, if I am not mistaken, the Congress announced the withdrawal of support. On 19th, the meeting of the Selection Committee took place. This could have taken place earlier also. On 19th, the meeting of the Selection Committee took place and on the 20th at midnight when the Congress had withdrawn support this announcement of the new Committee was made.

Constitutional propriety demands that such a major decision should be left to the successor Minister or the successor Government. Even if the decision has been taken, it should have been said that since they have lost the majority and since this Government is going out, let this matter be put up to the successor Government which will be coming in. So, I think that it is not correct to accuse the Government of fraud. I would not use strong words. He is my good friend. Perhaps, it was slightly improper to have hastened that notification at that time.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : Since you have referred to me, may I give a clarification, if you yield?

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : Yes, absolutely.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : Firstly, it is not factually correct to say that the Congress party withdrew support on 17th November. The Congress Party, on 17th November said that if the DMK Ministers were not dropped, it might be constrained to withdraw support. Mr. Sengupta is a veteran bureaucrat; he is still a babe in the political woods. Therefore, let him to try to tread on a strange terrain.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : The other point is about the Government hastening it with the notification. By 20th, it was quite clear that the Congress was withdrawing support.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : No. No. It was not clear. Sir, this point needs to be clarified. I am happy that a person with a background of Mr. Nitish Sengupta had raised it, because it permits me to go on record with my clarification. You may please refer to any dates. I said that the Vice-President of India was requested to make selections on 30th October. After that, the Government had no role to play. Secondly, the Board was constituted through a notification on 23rd November, by which time, the Government had not fallen formally. The Congress had not written to the President of India at all. This is the point I would like to clarify.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : The question is whether it was proper to issue that notification because the power to issue that notification rests with the Government. The Government at that stage should have announced that it is an important decision. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (SILCHAR): During the last six months, before the elections, how many decisions were taken by this Government? Now, you are referring to one decision taken at that time.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : Let us confine our discussion to the present subject matter.

A question was raised about the removal - or I do not know whether we can call it removal - or just simply vacating the position under the law. I have told that there were many defects in the entire Act. It made the main author or the architect of that, Mr. Upendra issue a statement once in a Press briefing saying that this Act has become practically unworkable. That is why, there was a long delay in implementing the Act between 1990 and 1997. Successive Governments came, but nobody bothered about that Act at all, although it has been passed unanimously.

Well, certainly, Mr. Jaipal Reddy deserves a lot of credit for implementing this Act, for the first time. When the persons from the Media asked him as to what happened to the recommendations of the Nitish Sengupta Committee some of which are very appropriate, he did announce that he shall give effect to them through legislation later on, but just then he was in a hurry to introduce that law because for eight years they had been sitting on it.

Eight years of delay took place between the passing of the Act and its implementation. These eight years were very very crucial. Now, there is a sea change in the technological scenario and the electronic media scenario. Things are no longer what they were in the seventies and eighties. The Act itself says that the term of the Members would be for six years and one-third of them will retire every two years. The Government will retire two of them after every two years. The Government has the power to do it and the Government went about it. According to whatever limited facts that I have been able to gather, the Government decided to really concentrate on those who are in the media and who had direct professional relationship with the media field and decided to retain them. The Government chose to retire those who did not have that direct professional experience or attachment to the media field. That is why the question of retiring one lady and one gentleman came up. But, bear in mind, not a single BJP person has been picked up and placed in their place. I would have understood it if the Government is set on saffronising the whole thing and removing the known Leftists. But that is not borne out by the facts because not a single saffron person has been put in their place. Still the vacancies exist and we have to see what the Government is going to do. I think it is unfair to accuse the Government at this stage of being particularly biased against the Leftists or people of Left protestations. The Government has decided to retain those eminent people like space scientist Shri U.R. Rao and Shri Abid Hussain. Shri Nikhil Chakroborty who is my mentor has passed away. So, it is not correct to see or read anything and everything, when nothing is there. Therefore, I think, it would be unfair to blame the Minister and the Government that in a high handed manner they replaced two of the members and retained others. It is neither red nor saffron.

The Government had the power to replace two of them and it only followed the provisions of law. One of the two members even went to the High Court and that petition, I understand, had been dismissed. So, the High Court have read the law correctly and they have decided on the basis of their understanding of what the law says. It has been said that three Ministers of the BJP have spoken in three different voices. That only shows that there is some internal democracy in BJP. That only shows that they are not controlled by the Sangh parivar or some other organisations. Shrimati Sushma Swaraj took very keen interest in Prasar Bharati. She wanted to recommend some of the recommendations that my Committee had recommended. Then, Shri Pramod Mahajan made a statement as to what is the point in providing autonomy when the Government is so much concerned and when the Government spends so much money. A little while ago I mentioned that the entire question of autonomy has become somewhat irrelevant because of the changes that have taken place in several fields.

I feel the Government should come out with a resurrected Prasar Bharati Act taking into account the great changes which have taken place in the political scenario, in the technological scenario etc., which brooks of no legal difficulty. So, I do hope that the changes which have taken place from 1990 onwards would be taken into account. Shri Jeevan Reddy, Supreme Court Justice has said that nobody has the right to control the air. But then the Doordarshan would be part of the Government media.

Therefore, the Committee to which a reference was made, of which I happened to be the Chairman, made a recommendation that like BBC, Channel-I should be devoted to only expressing the Government's point of view, news or the current affairs and Channels II, III and IV should be devoted to things like, agriculture, health and population. Of course, they should also be permitted to raise a part of the resources through advertisements. Mr. Chairman, Sir, the basic point is, today, how do you make Doordarshan compete with the number of private channels that are there. Doordarshan is the national property but it must acquire competitive edge. There I think it is professionalisation or professionalism more than anything else which holds good.

Another recommendation of mine in regard to Doordarshan and All India Radio was this. Historically, Doordarshan was an off-shoot of the All India Radio system but there is no reason why they should be kept together. They should be separated because technologies are different, styles are different and even the programmes are also becoming quite different. If you see a discussion or something on Doordarshan, it will appear as if the whole thing is planned on the style of All India Radio. But, normally if you see the television programmes elsewhere, you will see an altogether different technology. I am sorry, I am going into some of these details.

The other point is regarding the Doordarshan and the All India Radio being kept together. Doordarshan is a glamour boy. Everybody

from the AIR wants to go to Doordarshan. I would say that those who are in Doordarshan should be in Doordarshan only. Just to get the promotion they go to AIR, revert and again get back to Doordarshan as quickly as they can. This, Mr. Chairman, is all on the present situation.

As I have recommended, instead of statutory corporation, the Doordarshan and the AIR should be turned into two separate joint sector companies. I had a long discussion with Shri Jaipal Reddy and he asked me as to how I get across the figure of Rs.50,000 crore which the Government is supposed to have given as the value of the property. I told him that it is entirely by the figures which the department gave to me. I had suggested that shares should be issued to Government or others and they should be turned into the joint sector companies or separate companies. Who says, radio has become obsolete? Today, one of the wonders in the Western world has been the revival of radio and it competing with T.V., just as ground stations are competing with the satellites.

I have taken a lot of time. I am sorry for that. But it is not correct to say that the Government has committed fraud or have deliberately made use of or manipulated the law. On the other hand they have proceeded according to the law, as laid down in the Act which was passed unanimously in 1990.

">SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): Sir, the BJP in power and the BJP out of power, are two different faces. This I say when I compare what Shri Pramod Mahajan had said and what today Shri Arun Jaitley has to say in regard to the autonomy or rather the undesirability of autonomy, particularly in respect of the Doordarshan and Akashvani the two electronic media. If we compare what the Government say today with what has been said earlier, my saying two faces of the BJP - out of power and in power - will be confirmed. I am referring to a larger figure in the saffron camp. His name is, Shri L.K. Advani. Immediately after the Janata Government had come under the leadership of Shri Morarji Desai, Shri Advani was the Minister for I&B. You may see what he had to say at that point of time. Of course, the Minister may now say that two decades have passed and a lot of changes have taken place. The Minister seems to be more conscious about the technological changes.

">He is trying to emphasize accountability. He is trying to give focus to the credibility aspect of Doordarshan and Aakashvani. But things have not changed much about the concept of autonomy. As has been rightly pointed out by my esteemed colleague Shri Jaipal Reddy, since the 1960s, so many committees, so many individuals, experts, Parliamentarians and Ministers have been emphasizing that the only alternative was autonomy. Autonomy can be of different varieties. There should be public autonomy, so that people can have access to information. People have a right to information to communicate their feelings, emotions, messages and also have access to it.

"> Rightly in 1995 the historic judgment by the Supreme Court said that airways was a public property. There can be no governmental control or for that matter there can be no private control either. It is just like oxygen or river water. Airways is a public property.

"> I had been referring to the two faces of BJP. Now I shall refer to their two voices. They are speaking of the second generation reforms. They do not even know as to what happened to the first generation reforms. In their own manifesto they have written that since 1991, for six years, Congress Party had wasted the reforms process and they landed the country in distress and sorrow. Out of the eight years of reforms process, they refer to the first six years like this. In the last two-three years they have suddenly woken up to the second generation reforms. They say, they are selling this and that; they are opening it on a platter; they are making presentation of Navratnas; they are speaking so much of market economy and decontrol. Looking at the pace at which they are proceeding, even the World Bank is asking as to what we are doing -

"> पागल है। यह क्या डायरेक्शन होगा, क्या तरीका होगा।

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">Mr. Paul Krugman and many other great advocates of reforms are criticising this and they themselves are taking a U-turn. Now they are speaking about reforms. That is a different story. But here is an area where they want to get back the control on the media.

">SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (KALAHANDI): I am on a Point of Order, Sir.

">MR. CHAIRMAN : Under what rule?

">SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO : Under Rule 376, Sir. My Point of Order is that when the hon. Member was referring to disinvestment and all that, he used the word `paagal". I would request you, as this word is unparliamentary, to kindly expunge it from the proceedings.

">SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : That can be done by you, Sir. Whether the word `pagal" is unparliamentary or not can be checked up and a direction can be given from the Chair. The Chair can check it up, Sir.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Please continue.

">SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO : Sir, this is a serious matter.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: It is not unparliamentary. Please take your seat.

">SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Perhaps you have not seen the Zero Hour. That is why you are questioning it. During that time, many of us are in that category!

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : I must thank him because I did not hear the word. He has got it broadcast now.

"> श्री रूपचन्द पाल : जो चल रहा है, वह भाषा में भी हो और दृष्टि में भी हो।

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">What I have been telling is that they are speaking in two voices.

"> Now I refer not to the divergent voices of BJP, but to the individual voice of the hon. Minister, an eminent lawyer, Shri Arun Jaitley. He said that autonomy was needed when their party first came to power as the official media had been misused earlier by the Congress Party. Now they are misusing it.

"> I am just reading a part of what has been stated by the eminent Hindi literator who has been unceremoniously removed from the Prasar Bharati Board. There was a Public Interest Litigation also against his removal on which the Delhi High Court had already given its judgement.

">AN HON. MEMBER: But he lost the case.

">SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : He lost the case; it is all right. But morally it is indignant; morally no civilised Government should do it. He said that, since the electoral process was set under way, he had assumed the authority on behalf of the Prasar Bharati Board to monitor the public grievances about the quality of political coverage in the electronic media. He, in this capacity, received no fewer than 1,500 complaints from the viewers about Doordarshan's unseemly bias towards the BJP. He argues:

"> "For every individual who writes, there must be, at least, a thousand who share the same perception."

"> Sir, they say that the Congress Party was misusing it and that is why, they had demanded autonomy, at that time. But now, the Prasar Bharati Board member himself is publicly saying that he had intervened against the misuse by the BJP during the election process. Then, the Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commission had also intervened. They wanted to introduce a 24 hours News Channel to give publicity for the image building of their leader, to have an edge in the election. But the Election Commission had intervened in the matter. They could not forget and forgive the people who had been upholding the concept of autonomy and guarding the autonomous institution.

"> Sir, the Government had unceremoniously removed the members of the Prasar Bharati Board. Is this the way to remove them that the people should know that they have been removed only through newspapers? What does it show? This shows to the people that the BJP has come to power and they will remove everybody, whatever may be their status or however high the reputation and recognition they may be having throughout the world, be it in the Indian Council of Historical Research, be it in the NCERT, etc. Can they not show the simple courtesy of informing those people like Romila Thapar and Rajendra Yadav, on telephone about their removal? Is this a civilised Government? They do not even have the courtesy of informing those people, who have been honoured internationally and who have contributed to the Prasar Bharati Board in their capacity as members, by making a single telephone call. Can they justify it? No; they cannot justify it. So, they will have to keep silent. It never happens in any civilised country.

"> The member of the Prasar Bharati Board, who had been removed now, says:

"> "My ultimate objective is to ensure credibility of the medium..."

"> "...Because of this only autonomy was recommended."

"> Sir, Doordarshan was once called 'Indira Darshan' and the most eloquent speakers from that side, at that time, were Shri L.K. Advani and people who had been in the Opposition then, including our hon. Prime Minister. But now they are speaking in different voices among themselves also. Shri Arun Jaitley is speaking about accountability. He is also speaking about the autonomy required these days because, he says, this was misused by them. He is also speaking about credibility. But I shall give due credit to Shri Pramod Mahajan. He does not care for the hidden agenda. He does not have anything to hide. He says:

"> "Prasar Bharati has lost all relevance. It was wrong to constitute Prasar Bharati."

"> Sir, in 1990, I was here, many of us were here and Shri P. Upendra discussed it for several hours with us. I have been associated with the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for several years, since 1980.

17.00 hrs.

Some of us were consulted at various levels and ultimately, a consensus was reached. BJP was a party to that. Their leaders were a party to that.

What is he saying? He says: "Ensuring autonomy to the Government, autonomy to the Government channel, it is a meaningless exercise. We are spending one thousand crores of rupees. How can we just allow this body to work without any Governmental control?" This is what Shri Pramod Mahajan says. He says further: "No Government would like to spend about Rs. 1,000 crore on DD and AIR and have no control over them in day to day activities, specially at the functioning of the Prasar Bharati."

I just remind them that once our hon. Shri P.A. Sangma, when he was the Information and Broadcasting Minister, somewhere in the North-East had come out with a statement that Prasar Bharati was only an extended wing of the Government and it was meant for propagation of Government views only. This is what Shri Sangma had said. He was the Minister of Information and Broadcasting for a brief period. At that time, the entire Opposition including the leaders of the BJP joined in the protest and said that after the Prasar Bharati had been set up as a public autonomous body, the Ministers should not interfere in its functioning. Somehow, the Minister, Shri Sangma, tried to retract and backed out from the stand he had taken in public.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is another Member on behalf of my Party who will speak. So, I am trying to be brief.

Sir, he has talked about professionalism. What is professionalism? Let us define it. Yes, it is to put people like Shri Sonu Sen, Gnanamurthy, and others. Okay, they are professionals. But what about the presentation of pluralism of views, which is a verdict of the Supreme Court?

After six months, micro soft and some other things are going to come in Internet. In these days, a debate is going on, in this age of information technology, digital revolution, how more and more people will have access to global scenario, access to global information. You are trying to have a control over it. I do not know whether this is outside the Parliamentary parlance or not. They are living in the fools" paradise. You shall be punished by history, you shall be punished by the technology, and you shall be punished by the people next time when you face the people.

Firstly, he has taken one stand, that is professionalism. Immediately, when he saw that it would not stand the test of criticism, which was coming on, then he took a legal stand. He said that he removed them because he had got the authority and power and also said that they could go to the court. Why had this Prasar Bharati been set up? Why did you agree to it? Why are you still speak about autonomy? Why are you still speak about accountability?

Communications, broadcasting and telecommunication will ultimately converge. We have the Ministry of Information and Technology. Yesterday I was asking the hon. Minister for Communications a question. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has been set up by an Act of Parliament. They are defying the C&AG when the C&AG wanted to know from them as to what was the basis for the fixation of the tariff structure, which goes very much against the DoT and the Government companies.

Instead of giving them that information, they are going to the court and challenging the authority of the Comptroller and Auditor General and spending Government money. And you are saying that they are autonomous! Terms like 'autonomy' and 'independence' are being used by them only to confuse others. Even the regulator is accountable to someone and Prasar Bharati, of course, is accountable. But that does not mean that it is accountable to an individual Minister. There was a very big rally at Delhi. The Minister himself had, on the floor of the House, said that when the news had gone for broadcasting it, some higher-ups had intervened to say that no such news should go because it was a rally of the Third Front secular parties at Delhi. I had said that on the floor of the House also and no one had the guts to reply that day. They are behaving in a manner which will lead to their own graves. These people are behaving in a manner where they will lose their credibility. And if they want to control the electronic media, the electronic media also will lose its credibility. We have got excellent people. We have the best professionals in our structure in Doordarshan and also in Akashwani. Our people have been honoured. I can give you umpteen number of such cases. Our own Secretary was taken by Star TV Our own people in Doordarshan were taken by Zee TV and others. They are running their channels because of our own trained people and still they say we do not have professionals, and just to bring in professionalism, two eminent people had to be removed. No one will buy their argument. No one will buy their logic.

They are talking about so many irrelevant and meaningless things about technology and about digital technology age. I have been associated with a Select Committee under the leadership of Shri Sharad Pawar. I had the occasion to listen to many viewpoints. I have also been associated with the National Media Policy Group led by Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. When Shri K.P. Singh Deo was the Minister, he had set up that body and I was the privileged person to be associated with that body. I had the occasion to listen to so many things. The Congressmen had their own choice, their own preferences, their own authoritarian style of functioning and the BJP has been claiming that they are different, they are democratic. But now we see that there is no difference between them in the matter of misuse of the electronic media and also it is lopsided on information, education, entertainment. Now they say that on 26th January, we will have one Education Channel, we will have this, we will have that, but their preference is commercialisation, commerce and profit, not service. I shall only remind them that when Doordarshan had come first in the nineties, during the late Shrimati Indira Gandhi's time, it was said that it will be the most meaningful instrument of social change, with emphasis on education, information and, of course, healthy entertainment, which they are themselves destroying, and I think they will destroy themselves by trying to destroy these institutions which are built up by the people of this country. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

"> श्री राजीव प्रताप रूडी (छपरा) सभापति महोदय, आज प्रसार भारती पर यह चर्चा सदन में आई है। जयपाल रेड्डी साहब ने विशेष रूप से अपनी खूबसूरत अंग्रेजी में तथ्यों को छिपाने का प्रयास किया। आज मीडिया और प्रसार भारती का उल्लेख इसलिए सदन में हुआ है कि उसके दो सदस्यों को हटाया गया। विश्व के किसी कोने में टेलिविजन को छोड़ा नहीं जा सकता। जिस तरह टैकनॉलोजी बढ़ रही है, जिस तरह पूरे विश्व में लोगों का आकर्षण मीडिया के प्रति बढ़ता जा रहा है, जिस तरह पूरे विश्व में प्रतिस्पर्धा बढ़ रही है, उसे देखते हुए यह एक ऐसा स्रोत है जिस के माध्यम से विश्व के कोने-कोने के लोग एक दूसरे के साथ जुड़ते हैं। भारत के परिवेश में जब हम दूरदर्शन और ऑल इंडिया रेडियो की बात करते हैं तो आजादी के बाद हमें यह महसूस होता रहा कि ऑल इंडिया रेडियो और दूरदर्शन पर सरकारी नियंत्रण अधिक है। अतः इसे स्वायत्ता देनी चाहिए। यह चर्चा का विषय शुरू से रहा। सरकार ने भी इस दिशा में प्रयास किया और इसकी अहमियत महसूस की।

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"> १९९० में दोनों सदनों ने प्रसार भारती विधेयक को बहुमत से पारित किया। उन ६ वर्षों के बीच कई सरकारें आईं लेकिन किसी ने उसे नोटिफाई करने का प्रयास नहीं किया। १९९६ में जयपाल जी जब सूचना प्रसारण मंत्री बने तो उन्होंने प्रसार भारती को नोटिफाई किया। इसकी शुरुआत विवादों से हुई। मैं रेड्डी जी की बातें बड़े ध्यान से सुन रहा था। उन्होंने अपनी शैली में सब बातों को रखा लेकिन उन्होंने एक जगह कुछ बातों को छिपाने का प्रयास किया। यह महत्वपूर्ण विषय है। जब माननीय सदस्यों ने इस विषय को उठाया तो उन्होंने उठ कर उनका जवाब देने का प्रयास किया।

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"> १९९७ में एक अध्यादेश आया जबकि संसद सत्र बुलाने का सम्मन निकल चुका था। यहाँ जयपाल जी बैठे हैं। जब यह विपक्ष में थे तो इस बात का विरोध करते थे। लगता है एक छिपा हुआ एजेंडा इनके पास भी था। वह उसे लागू करने के लिए फटाफट अध्यादेश लाए।

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"> प्रसार भारती बिल के ६ महत्वपूर्ण बिन्दु थे। उसमें यह प्रावधान था कि लोक सभा और राज्य सभा के माननीय सदस्यों की प्रसार भारती में भागीदारी होनी चाहिए। लेकिन उन्होंने इस बात को विलोपित कर दिया। उस समय सी.ई.ओ. की ऐज के बारे में कहा गया था कि अधिकतम ऐज ६२ वर्ष होनी चाहिए। उन्होंने इसे भी विलोपित कर दिया। उन्होंने आयु सीमा समाप्त कर दी। इनकी परिभाषा में चाहे वह ७० का हो, ८० का हो, ९० वर्ष का हो या १०० वर्ष का हो। इस क्षेत्र में ५५ हजार करोड़ रुपए का पूंजी निवेश है। इसमें फुल टाइम डायरेक्टर बिल्ड का प्रावधान था। उन्होंने इस पद को भी विलोपित किया। जब ५५ करोड़ रुपए की व्यवस्था प्रसार भारती में की गई तो उन्होंने यह महसूस नहीं किया कि उस सदस्य को वहाँ मनोनित किया जाना है, जहाँ ४६ हजार कर्मचारी थे। प्रसार भारती में उनका स्थानांतरण होना था। उनके

अधीनस्थ इनको आना था। इन्होंने कार्मिक के निदेशक का पद भी गायब कर दिया। संयुक्त मोर्चा की सरकार के समय गुजराल साहब प्रधान मंत्री थे और जयपाल जी सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री थे। डी.एम.के. के सवाल पर यह घोषणा हो चुकी थी कि समर्थन वापस लिया जाएगा। यह इस समय असहमति जता रहे हैं जबकि इस बात की पूरी दुनिया को जानकारी थी। इन्हें उसी मीडिया के माध्यम से भी जानकारी थी जिस विभाग के वह मंत्री थे। इनको कहीं पता नहीं था कि यह सरकार जाने वाली है। २९ अक्टूबर को यह सदन में अध्यादेश लेकर आए। अगली १७ तारीख को सीताराम कंसरी जी का अल्टीमेटम आ गया कि डी.एम.के. सरकार को बाहर कीजिए, नहीं तो हम समर्थन वापस लेंगे। अगले दिन १८.११.१९९७ को सरकार के पास नोट पट्ट अप हुआ कि कांस्टीट्यूट दी प्रसार भारती।

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"> सभापति महोदय, इसकी अगली हरकत सुनिये। १९.११.९७ को एक दिन के भीतर, जिस बोर्ड का गठन सरकार जाने की अवस्था में तब तक नहीं हुआ था, उप-राष्ट्रपति उसके सदस्य, चेरमैन, प्रेस काउंसिल उसके सदस्य, राष्ट्रपति जी द्वारा मनोनीत किये जाने वाले सदस्य उसके सदस्य बन गए और सिलेक्ट कमेटी १९ तारीख को गठित हुई। ५५ हजार करोड़ रुपये का जहां पूंजी निवेश हो, जहां इतना बड़ा निर्णय लिया जाना था, एक शाम को छः सदस्यों के मनोनयन की प्रक्रिया पूरी हुई। सरकार का उसमें कोई हस्तक्षेप नहीं था। आसमान से सातों नाम उसमें टपक गये।

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">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Will you yield for a minute?

">SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : I will not yield now; I will complete my speech, and then I will yield.

"> सभापति महोदय, एक शाम में छः नाम तय कर दिये गये। १९ तारीख को सिलेक्ट कमेटी की बैठक हो गई, उसमें से नाम प्रस्तावित होकर चला गया। २०.११.९७ को माननीय सीताराम कंसरी द्वारा अंतिम रूप से कहा गया कि अंतिम समय है, डी.एम.के. को झोंप करो, नहीं तो कांग्रेस पार्टी समर्थन वापिस ले लेगी। हम संसद सदस्य यहां बैठे हैं, पदाधिकारी भी दूर सून रहे होंगे और लोग भी सून रहे होंगे, भारत सरकार ने विश्व के पैमाने पर इस देश में पहली बार इतनी एफीशिएन्सी के साथ किया होगा। २० तारीख उसे बहाल करने के लिए नोट मूल होता है और इनका एक वरीय पदाधिकारी जो ज्वाइंट सैक्रेटरी लैबल का है, वह कहता है कि जिस चीफ एक्जीक्यूटिव ऑफिसर का नाम इसमें प्रस्तावित है

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">He cannot be nominated as CEO because he has interests in Doordarshan and All India Radio.

"> क्योंकि गिल साहब और उनकी पत्नी उस समय सीरियल बनाते थे और उनमें काम करते थे। रात में ठीक ११ बजे यह सचिका चलती है और सचिव उस सचिका में रात के ११ बजे का समय देते हैं। एडीशनल सैक्रेटरी रात के ११.३० बजे उसमें लिखते हैं कि यह असंभव है, इसका गठन नहीं किया जा सकता है, यह नियमों के खिलाफ है। रातों-रात एफीडेविट लिया जाता है, जिस सी.ई.ओ. को इनके द्वारा नियुक्ति की जानी थी, उससे एफीडेविट लिया जाता है कि हमारे पास इंटरैस्ट नहीं है और एफीडेविट लेकर उसके नाम को पार करने की कोशिश की जाती है। बात वहीं खत्म नहीं हुई, २० तारीख से २१ तारीख तक प्रसार भारती के सी.ई.ओ. का गठन और उसके सदस्यों का गठन - भारत सरकार में ऐसा कभी नहीं हुआ होगा कि एक रात में २४ जगह सचिका जाती है, २४ स्थानों पर लोग जाते हैं, सैकशन ऑफिसर से लेकर गवर्नमेंट ऑफ इंडिया के सैक्रेटरी तक सचिका जाती है और २४ घंटे के बाद सचिका श्री जयपाल रेड्डी साहब के पास जाती है। वह उसमें अपना अंतिम निर्णय देते हुए सी.ई.ओ. की वहां नियुक्ति करते हैं। यहां भारत सरकार में एक साधारण सा नियम ३७७ का मामला जाता है तो नौ महीने तक घूमता रहता है और इतनी बड़ी ईकाई के गठन में मात्र ४८ घंटे लगते हैं, दिन-रात सचिका चलती है। मैं श्री जयपाल रेड्डी को दाद देता हूँ कि वह दिन में ही काम नहीं करते थे, बल्कि रात-रात भर जागकर काम करते थे और पूरे विभाग को रात भर जागकर रखते थे। इन्होंने जिन्हें वहां प्रतिनियुक्ति पर बैठाया और आज यह जिस जगह पर बैठे हैं, इन्हें एक बड़ा खतरा होने वाला है। गिल साहब बड़े अच्छे लिटरेचरिस्ट थे, नावल लिखते थे, किताबें लिखते थे। उन्होंने एक किताब 'डिडिनेस्टी' लिखी, जिसमें उन्होंने नेहरू परिवार के बारे में वर्णन किया है और जिस तरह का वर्णन उन्होंने उसमें किया है, मैं उसका उल्लेख यहां नहीं कर सकता। खासकर श्री राजीव गांधी जैसा व्यक्ति जो अब दिवंगत आत्मा है, उनका भी वर्णन किया गया है। उन्होंने उस किताब में जो वर्णन किया है, उससे मुझे बड़ा अफसोस हुआ है। माननीय जयपाल रेड्डी आज जिस जगह बैठे हुए हैं, लेकिन इन सब बातों से मेरा कोई विशेष मकसद नहीं है, मैं सिर्फ यह दर्शाना चाहता हूँ कि राजनीति में कितना बड़ा अपवाद है। मुझे दुख होता है जब मैं सदन में इस बात को उठाता हूँ। लेकिन हर बार हर समस्या के समय हर नेता को अपनी-अपनी झोली में झाँककर देखना होगा कि किस परिस्थिति में इतना बड़ा निर्णय लिया गया और आज प्रसार भारती पर चर्चा उठाई जा रही है और जो व्यवस्था उसकी भीतर की गई है, उसके बारे में चर्चा करने पर लोगों को कष्ट होता है। ... (व्यवधान)

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">MR. CHAIRMAN : He is not yielding; so, I will allow you after him.

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, I have a right.

">SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : I have a right to carry on.

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : I have a right to offer a personal clarification.

">SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : I know that these various things which I am just telling you are hurting you. But then, in the interest of this country, I am compelled to speak out these things.

">MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Reddy, he is not yielding.

"> ... (Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: You can speak after he completes his submission.

"> ... (Interruptions)

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, I have every right to offer a personal clarification ... (Interruptions)

"> डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह (बैशाली) : सभापति महोदय, कोई सदस्य यहां बैठा है और उसका नाम लिया जाए और उस पर यदि कोई आरोप लगाया जाए, तो वह अपना क्लैरीफिकेशन देगा या नहीं?

">... (व्यवधान)

"> ">

">SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, he has the right to offer a clarification ... (Interruptions)

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, I would rise only to offer my personal clarification ... (Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: But he is not yielding. You can speak after he finished his submission.

"> ... (Interruptions)

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, there is no question of that ... (Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: I will give you a chance then.

"> ... (Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: Under what rule do you want to intervene?

"> ... (Interruptions)

"> डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह : सभापति महोदय, हम यहां बैठे हैं और अगर कोई माननीय सदस्य हमारे ऊपर कोई आरोप लगाए, हमारा नाम ले, तो क्या हम बैठे रहेंगे? नियमों की किताब देख लीजिए, उसमें लिखा है कि सदस्य पर्सनल एक्सप्लेनेशन दे सकेंगा।

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">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, you could consult everybody. I have the inalienable right to offer my personal clarification ... (Interruptions) I have the right to offer a personal clarification ... (Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. You have the right to clarify your point. But I will give you a chance after he finishes his submission.

"> ... (Interruptions)

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, the only problem is that he is making some points now and later on ... (Interruptions) if I clarify the points ... (Interruptions)

"> श्री राजीव प्रताप रूडी सभापति महोदय, मैं किसी पर आरोप नहीं लगा रहा हूँ। जो सत्य है वह बता रहा हूँ।

... (व्यवधान)

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">MR. CHAIRMAN: You speak after he completes.

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, my clarification at that stage may be slightly out of place. Therefore, I need to clarify now so that the hon. Member can also be enlightened ... (Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: You can speak after he completes.

"> Shri Rudy, you may continue.

"> श्री राजीव प्रताप रूडी : सभापति महोदय, पूरे सदन को बड़ा कष्ट हो रहा है क्योंकि इस विषय को मैं कुछ सदस्यों के बीच उठा रहा हूँ। यह विषय इसलिए आया है कि श्रीमती रोमिला थापर और श्री राजेन्द्र यादव को हटा दिया गया है। इसलिए इन्हें बड़ा कष्ट हो रहा है। हमारे लैफ्ट के साथी भी यह समझना चाह रहे हैं कि बड़ा गड़बड़ काम हुआ है।

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"> सभापति महोदय, प्रसार भारती के गठन के बाद से प्रति वर्ष १४०० से १५०० करोड़ रुपये का खर्च सरकार को वहन करना पड़ रहा है और उससे केवल ५५० करोड़ रुपये की आय हो रही है। मैं सरकार का ध्यान भी इस तरह आकर्षित करना चाहूंगा कि १९९६ से लेकर १९९९ तक पूरे देश में एडवर्टाइजमेंट के सेक्टर में ७६ प्रतिशत की बढ़ोत्तरी हुई है और उस अवधि में दूरदर्शन में प्रसार भारती के होते हुए भी सात प्रतिशत की गिरावट आई है। अगर इतने ही सक्षम हमारे पदाधिकारी होते और पैन्ल में उनका नाम होता, तो जिस ऑटोनोमी की बात हम कर रहे थे, जिस मैरिट की बात हम कर रहे थे, जो लक्ष्य हम प्रसार भारती के माध्यम से आज चार साल से प्राप्त करने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं, वह क्यों प्राप्त नहीं कर सके। मैं मानता हूँ कि प्रसार भारती की गुणवत्ता में कोई दोष नहीं है, लेकिन उसमें जिन व्यक्तियों का चयन किया है, जिन को कुर्सी पर बैठाया गया है, उनमें से कुछ लोग जो उसके लिए जिम्मेदार होने चाहिए थे, वे जिम्मेदार नहीं बनाए गए। वैसे लोगों को जिनकी भूमिका सक्षम नहीं थी, जो लायक नहीं थे, उस योग्यता को दर्शाने की स्थिति में नहीं थे, उनको वर्तमान सरकार ने बड़े ढंग से निकालने का, बाहर करने का एक प्रयास किया है क्योंकि उन लोगों को उस संविधान के तहत, उस नियम के तहत बाहर करना था, लेकिन वे नहीं गए। इस हिसाब से इसकी जो मनोभावना है वह ठीक है। जैसा यहां कहा गया है और बार-बार बात आती है कि भारतीय जनता पार्टी का कोई हिंडल एजेंडा है, मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि भारतीय जनता पार्टी का एक ही एजेंडा है राष्ट्रहित। उसके अलावा और कोई एजेंडा नहीं है।

">

Sir, Shri Jaipal Reddy has said that the air belongs to all of us. He quoted Pandit Nehru forgetting what Shri Gill had written in his book 'The Dynasty'. He has quoted the judgement of the Supreme Court while forgetting the activities which took place right under his nose in his Ministry then. He had said that his job as a Minister was to become jobless in the Ministry to make the Prasar Bharati strong. The Government knows very well as to how did they perform then.

सभापति महोदय, बाकी सदस्यों में से किस की कितनी-कितनी अवधि रहेगी, जहां तक इसका सवाल है, श्री विजय वर्गीय साहब मीडिया के व्यक्ति हैं, पूरा विश्व उनके बारे में जानता है। आबिद हुसैन साहब डिप्लोमेट हैं और राजीव गांधी फाउंडेशन से जुड़े रहे हैं। अगर सरकार की वैसी कोई मंशा होती, तो वे वहां नहीं होते। यू.आर. राव साहब स्पेस टेक्नोलॉजी के विशेषज्ञ हैं, लेकिन आज प्रधान मंत्री जी ने तीन सदस्यों की एक कमेटी बनाई है। उसमें कोई दूसरी नीयत नहीं है। उसमें जिन व्यक्तियों को रखा गया है वे उसके मूल उद्देश्यों को प्राप्त करने के लिए हैं। जिन नामों को उसमें शामिल किया गया है उसमें रखा गया है- नारायण मूर्ति को जिनको पूरा भारत जानता है, पूरा विश्व जानता है, वे इन्फॉर्मेशन टेक्नोलॉजी के विनार्ड हैं। सुल्लू सेन, जो देश भर में नहीं बल्कि पूरे विश्व में मार्केट कंसल्टेंसी के लिए जाने जाते हैं।

किरण कारनिक, जो भी आदमी टी.वी. खोलता है, वह डिस्कवरी चैनल देखे बगैर नहीं रह सकता। ऐसे लोगों की समिति बनाई गई है ताकि प्रसार भारती की गतिविधियों पर एक बार फिर निरीक्षण करके उसके बारे में जानकारी प्राप्त की जाये। आज प्रसार भारती में लोगों को हटाये जाने की बात को लेकर सदन में इस प्रकार की चर्चा करना ठीक नहीं है। मैं तो इस सदन के सामने यही कहना चाहूंगा कि जिस परिस्थिति में प्रसार भारती के बोर्ड का गठन पहले हुआ और हमारी सरकार की जो मंशा है। ... (व्यवधान)

Sir, I was the second speaker from the BJP. Somehow my name has gone down very low in the list as it has happened with Prasar Bharati.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already spoken for 25 minutes.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : But, Sir, there are many important points left with me. I will try to conclude early.

समापति महोदय, मैं आपकी बातों से सहमत हूँ। प्रसार भारती के गठन इत्यादि बहुत सारे मुद्दों पर मैंने चर्चा की है। हमारी सरकार की नीयत साफ है और हमारी सरकार इस बात को मानकर चलती है कि आज जिस तरह से प्रतिस्पर्धा मीडिया के क्षेत्र में, टेलीविजन के क्षेत्र में और घर के भीतर आने वाले तमाम-

bombardment of television channels inside our houses.

जिस प्रकार से यह सब हो रहा है, उसमें प्रतिस्पर्धा की आवश्यकता है। आज जरूरत है कि दूरदर्शन को भी ऐसी स्वायत्तता दी जाये। आने वाले दिनों में पूरे विश्व के पैमाने पर जिस तरह से हम बी.बी.सी. देखते हैं, जिस तरह से बाकी चैनल्स देखते हैं, उसी तरह से इसकी गुणवत्ता ऐसी हो। पूरे विश्व में जो संस्कारों की गिरावट है, पूरे विश्व के स्तर पर लोगों के बीच में सोच है कि वे भारत के पौराणिक अवस्था में पहुँचे। लोगों में सोच है कि हमारे दूरदर्शन के चैनल्स भी विश्व में देखे जायें और इससे भारत का सम्मान बढ़े। जो स्वायत्तता की बात कर रहे हैं, अपने पांव पर खड़े होने की बात कर रहे हैं, जिस आटोनामी की बात कर रहे हैं, पूरे सदन के लोग सहमत होंगे कि आने वाले दिनों में जिस सबल नेतृत्व के साथ, श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी के सबल नेतृत्व में आज भारतीय जनता पार्टी की सरकार पूरे देश में चल रही है। हमारे तेज तर्रार इन्फोर्मेशन एंड ब्राडकास्टिंग मिनिस्टर जिन्होंने निर्णय लेने का प्रयास किया है, हमारी सरकार एकदम तय करेगी, एकदम कटिबद्ध है कि आने वाले दिनों में प्रसार भारती के पूरे नियमों को लागू करते हुए, उसको स्वायत्तता देते हुए उस कार्यवाही को पूरा करेंगे।

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Rudy made specific references to some of the steps I took. Therefore, I am entitled to offer personal clarification.

BJP, perhaps like the Nazis, believe in repeating a big lie ten times so that it can pass for truth. I stated here, in the course of my presentation, that I notified the Act as early as the 22nd July, 1997. The Act came into irreversible operation as early as the 15th September. I wrote to the Vice-President of India on the 30th October. It should not be confused with 17th November.

The process of selection was initiated from the 30th October with the Vice-President as the Chairperson. Selections were made available to the Government on the 19th of November. The Government had no role to play in it. The Minister is a noted lawyer. As per Subsection (4), Section 4 of the Act, selections made by the Selections Committee are final and binding. Therefore, Shri Rudy is only a party to the process of spreading this Goebbelsian lie.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : This requires explanation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Giving explanations and counter-explanations is not allowed. Shri Rudy, please take your seat.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Sir, this matter is the property of the House now. These are facts. There are documents substantiating what I have said. In spite of that when such statements are made in the House, they should be withdrawn.

Sir, he has said that I am just trying to be a part of the bigger lie game. I do not agree with this. Sir, I think, he should withdraw these words.

Yes, it is an accepted fact that we are here in the Ruling party. We appreciate the mistakes committed by him and that can be condoned. We will find ways to solve it. But then, he should accept it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, please take your seat.

"> डॉ. गिरिजा व्यास (उदयपुर) : समापति महोदय, आज जब प्रसार भारती पर चर्चा हो रही है तो वर्षों पहले की वे घटनाएँ हम लोगों के दिमाग में घूम रही होंगी जिन्होंने आई. एंड बी. मिनिस्ट्री को देखा है। हमें याद है जब कांग्रेस सत्ता में थी तब आज उस तरफ बैठे हुए लोग, जो प्रसार भारती पर प्रश्नचिह्न लगा रहे हैं, प्रसार भारती की बकालत करते हुए नहीं थकते थे और बार-बार तत्कालीन सरकार पर आरोप लगाते थे कि हमने स्वायत्तता नहीं दी, हम लोग इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया पर पूरा कंट्रोल रखना चाहते हैं और स्वायत्तता जो आज की आवश्यकता है, कांग्रेस उससे दूर जा रही है। आज उस तरफ के लोगों से स्वायत्तता की एक अलग परिभाषा सुनकर कुछ अजीब जरूर लग रहा है और कुछ आश्चर्य भी हो रहा है। लेकिन आज भी एक व्यक्ति ऐसे हैं जो तब भी स्वायत्तता की बात करते थे और आज भी स्वायत्तता की बात करते हैं और आज उन्होंने मौजू विषय पर यह डिबेट रखकर सबको आत्मदर्शन का मौका दिया है। मेरा इशारा डा. रैडी की तरफ है। लेकिन मैं उस वक्त का थोड़ा निष्कर्ष करूँ कि जब १९९०-९१ में स्वायत्तता की बात पर विपक्ष का निशाना हमारे ऊपर होता था और हम तीन या चार बातें कहा करते थे, जो सच भी थीं। टैकनोलॉजी के हिसाब से बहुत सारी कम्पनियाँ भारत में आने वाली थीं और उस वक्त सबसे बड़ा यह खतरा था कि आज यदि प्रसार भारती का यही स्वरूप रहा तो आने वालों के साथ हमारा क्या सलूक होगा, उनका यहाँ किस प्रकार दिग्दर्शन होगा और उसके साथ हमारा टेलीविजन किस सीमा तक और कहाँ तक टिक पाएगा।

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"> दूसरी सबसे महत्वपूर्ण बात एकाउंटेंटबिलिटी की थी जिसके संबंध में हमारे तत्कालीन मंत्री जी ने अपनी बात कही थी। उन्होंने कहा था कि मैं ऑटोनोमी का पक्षधर हूँ लेकिन ऑटोनोमी कहें न कहें एकाउंटेंटबल हो, इस बात को देखना चाहता हूँ। कांग्रेस ने भी उस वक्त यही कहा कि एकाउंटेंटबिलिटी कहाँ होगी और उसके लिए सबसे बड़ी बात यह है कि बिल का आना जरूरी है और बिल तब तक पूरी तरह से नहीं बन सकता जब तक सभी तबकों से, सभी पोलिटिकल पार्टियों से और सभी मीडिया से जुड़े हुए लोगों से बात नहीं हो जाती।

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"> तीसरी बात कर्मचारियों की थी कि उनका समायोजन कैसे होगा, कहाँ होगा और बात वहाँ पर आकर रुक गई कि जब तक हम इन तबकों से बात नहीं कर सकें, हम ऑटोनोमी के पक्षधर होकर भी इस बिल और कानून को आधा-अधरा नहीं लाने देना चाहते। लेकिन मैंने कहा कि यह बिल और इसकी स्वायत्तता रैडी साहब का

बेबी है। इसलिए जब वे मंत्री बने तो उनकी पहली प्राथमिकता प्रसार भारतीय बिल लाने की थी। उस समय, मुझे याद है, आपने कहा था कि व्यवसायिकता के साथ-साथ प्रगतिबद्धता जरूरी है। आपने यह भी कहा था कि स्वायत्तता के साथ-साथ एकाउंटैबिलिटी जरूरी है। आपने कहा था, सरकार गिर गई, हमें मालूम नहीं कि आप कितने दिन में करते, लेकिन आपने कहा कि एकाउंटैबिलिटी तय करने के लिए पार्लियामेंट के लोगों का जो समायोजन हो, वह बिल लाना जरूरी है। आज सरकार के पक्षधर, जैसे कहा कि तीन मंत्री उस बार भारतीय जनता पार्टी के भी बने और तीनों के अलग-अलग मत हैं। वैसे आई. एंड बी. मिनिस्ट्री में अलग-अलग मत और मतान्तर का होना कोई नई बात नहीं है। मैं इसे सैल्फ सविंस कंफर्टेरिया कहा करती थी कि रोज जहां टेक्नोलॉजी बदलती हो, रोज जहां कन्सेप्ट बदलते हों, वहां पर हम एक बात पर मौन नहीं रह सकते और हमें भी उसके साथ-साथ चलना पड़ता है।

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"> आज अधिक बात न करते हुए मैं कुछ प्रश्न सरकार से करना चाहती हूँ। उसके पहले यह निश्चित कर दें कि कांग्रेस कभी भी इसके विरुद्ध नहीं थी कि ऑटोनोमी नहीं होने चाहिए और कांग्रेस ने कभी भी इसका मिसयून नहीं किया, इतिहास इस बात का गवाह है। लेकिन चूंकि उस वक्त लगातार कांग्रेस का शासन था, इसलिए कांग्रेस पर आक्षेप लगना जरूरी था कि कांग्रेस न्यून में, करंट अफेयर्स में और दूसरे मैटर्स में दखलअंदाजी कर रही है।

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"> सबसे पहले मैं सरकार से यही पूछना चाहती हूँ कि आज न्यून का क्या स्वरूप है? क्या १०-१२ साल में उसमें कोई तब्दीली हुई है या नहीं और सरकार उसमें कुछ करना चाहती है या नहीं? करंट अफेयर्स का क्या रूप है? जहां तक आटोनोमी का प्रश्न है, वहां पर वर्तमान सरकार ने यह निश्चित रूप से सत्य है कि उसे केसरिया बाना पहनाने की कोशिश की है। अब २४ घंटे समाचारों के द्वारा अपने नेता को प्रोजेक्ट करने की कोशिश, दूसरी बात उन्हें लगता है कि क्षेत्रीय दूरदर्शन केन्द्र जहां हैं, वहां अपनी-अपनी तत्कालीन सरकारों द्वारा केसरिया बाना पहुंच सके इसलिए प्रसार भारतीय से काले आदेश के जरिए सांस्कृतिक गरिमा पर कुठाराघात करने की कोशिश की जा रही है। वह चाहे बिहार या राजस्थान की बात हो। रोजनल केन्द्र, जिन्हें हमने आशान्वित होकर अपने कार्यकाल में समय दिया था कि वे अपने संस्कृति से जुड़े रहे, आज पता नहीं प्रसार भारतीय क्यों उन बातों को उलझाकर उनके समय में कमी करना चाहती है।

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"> गांधी जी ने १९२२ में हरिजन में एक बात कही थी कि आने वाला समय एक खुले वातावरण का समय होगा और उस समय हम किसी पर भी कंट्रोल नहीं रख सकते। आप लोगों ने बात तो कर ली कि प्रिंट मीडिया में फारेन इक्विटी नहीं होगी या होगी तो कितनी होगी, यह मुझे मालूम नहीं। लेकिन प्राइवेट चैनल्स को जब तक आप बिल लेकर नहीं आएंगे, मैं पूछना चाहती हूँ कि इस सम्बन्ध के कब बिल ला रहे हैं ताकि स्वायत्तता, कमिटमेंट और एकाउंटैबिलिटी बनी रहे? सरकार निश्चित करे कि वह बिल लेकर कब आ रही है? क्या उस बिल में केवल दूरदर्शन की बात होगी? हम लोगों ने इसीलिए देरी की थी कि हम केवल अपने दूरदर्शन और अपने रेंडियो तक सीमित नहीं रहना चाहते, क्योंकि बाहर के चैनल्स भी आ रहे हैं। जो प्राइवेट चैनल्स पर आज आप घंटियां विज्ञापन अलाऊ कर रहे हैं, उनके सम्बन्ध में सरकार की क्या मंशा होगी? सरकार इस एक्ट के तहत प्रसार भारतीय की पार्लियामेंट पर किस प्रकार की एकाउंटैबिलिटी बनेगी, अभी इसका खुलासा सरकार को करना है। मुझे ऐसा लग रहा है कि यह कोशिश हो रही है कि दूरदर्शन को समाप्त कर दिया जाए। उसके लिए आपने प्राइवेट लोगों के घंटियां कार्यक्रम और उसीके साथ-साथ रोजनल कार्यक्रमों में कमी तथा कमीशंड कार्यक्रमों में घपलेबाजी आई है और गिरावट भी आई है। हमारे साथी ठीक कह रहे थे कि प्रसार भारतीय बनने के बाद भी वह जारी रहता है तो प्रश्न चिन्ह लगता है। सरकार यदि यह बिल शीघ्रता से लाना चाहती है तो क्या फिर से सभी राजनीतिक दलों से बात करेगी, सभी मीडिया के लोगों से बात करेगी, जैसे की उस वक्त तत्कालीन मंत्री जी ने बिल लाने पर की थी?

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"> एक बात का जिक्र मैं और करना चाहूंगी। बहुत बार मीडिया के नामी-गिरामी लोगों को लेकर इसके सदस्य और अध्यक्ष बना दिए जाते हैं तो डा. रेड्डी हमारी पार्टी में हैं, लेकिन गिल साहब को हटाये जाने का तो अफसोस है, लेकिन जब मैं मंत्री थी तब तक वे दूरदर्शन पर फिल्म बनाया करते थे। इसलिए उनको अध्यक्ष बनाया गया, उस वक्त भी वे फिल्म बनाते थे या नहीं, मुझे मालूम नहीं, लेकिन सरकार इसका ध्यान रखे कि जो लोग इस प्रकार उसमें जुड़े हों, उनको इसमें न लिया जाए। अब भी हम आशान्वित हैं कि एकाउंटैबिलिटी हो, आटोनोमी हो। आज भी हम आशान्वित हैं कि संसद और प्रसार भारतीय के बीच तारतम्य हो कि २१वीं सदी के भारत का दिग्दर्शन हो सके। हम शिक्षा, सूचना और मनोरंजन, जो प्रारम्भ से हमारे इलेक्ट्रॉनिक और मीडिया की मुख्य धारा रहे हैं, उससे दूर नहीं जा सकते। इस आशा और विश्वास के साथ जिस सपने को डा. रेड्डी ने प्रस्तुत किया, उसको ब्रश अप करने की जरूरत तो जरूरी है, लेकिन उसे समाप्त नहीं किया जाए, यह हम सरकार से अपेक्षा करते हैं।

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"> डॉ. सुशील कुमार इन्दौरा (सिरसा) : सभापति महोदय, प्रसार भारतीय के कार्यक्रम के संबंध में हो रही चर्चा में आपने मुझे बोलने के लिए समय दिया, इसके लिए मैं आपको धन्यवाद देता हूँ। आजादी के बाद इस सदन में प्रसार भारतीय एक्ट बनाने की बात आई, लेकिन १०-१५ साल पहले महसूस किया कि एक ऐसा एक्ट बनाया जाए, जिसमें दूरदर्शन और रेंडियो को आजादी दी जाए, स्वायत्तता दी जाए। आजादी के बाद उसका उद्देश्य यही रहा कि प्रचार के माध्यम से, चाहे वह वह माध्यम रेंडियो हो या आकाशवाणी, देश के लोगों तक, आम गांव के लोगों तक देश की राजनीतिक, आर्थिक और सामाजिक विषयों पर जो सरकार काम कर रही है, उसको सच्चाई के साथ जनता तक पहुंचाया जाए। यह महसूस किया गया कि सरकार कुछ तथ्यों को छिपा लेती है या देश के जो सही हालात हैं या जो सही हकीकत हैं, उसको जनता तक नहीं पहुंचा रही है। उस वक्त यह महसूस किया गया कि एक एक्ट बनाया जाए, जिसको आजादी दी जाए, स्वायत्तता दी जाए और जिसके माध्यम से जनता का जो अधिकार है, वह अधिकार लोगों तक पहुंचे। इसी उद्देश्य को ध्यान में रखते हुए, १९९० में प्रसार भारतीय एक्ट बनाया गया और इस दिशा में प्रसार भारतीय की जो-जो निम्मेदारियां हैं, उनको निभाने के लिए वह कटिबद्ध है।

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"> महोदय, मैं सदन के सामने आज की परिस्थिति में आकाशवाणी और रेंडियो की जो महत्ता है, वह मैं बताना चाहता हूँ। आज आप छोटें-छोटें से गांव में चला जाइए, हर गांव में

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"> है। इस वजह से रेंडियो की महत्ता खत्म हुई है और आज

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"> का प्रचलन काफी बढ़ गया है। आज गरीब से गरीब आदमी के पास

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"> है और वह हर कार्यक्रम देखता है। देश में तकरीबन ४० चैनल्स काम कर रहे हैं। इन सारे चैनल्स को देखने का वह प्रयास करता है कि उसे कहीं से राजनीतिक सच्चाई पता चले कि देश की अर्थ व्यवस्था कहां है। साथ ही सामाजिक एकता कहां है, वह यह भी देखना चाहता है। देश का नागरिक यह भी देखना चाहता है कि वह कैसे अपने आप में राष्ट्रमक्ति और देशमक्ति की भावना पैदा करे तथा सीखना चाहता है। जब मैं बहुत छोटा था, तो मुझे याद है, गांव के लोग रेंडियो अपने बगल में दबा कर, खेतों में काम किया करते थे और हर कार्यक्रम सुनते थे। जब चुनाव हुआ करते थे, तो पांच मिनट में बार-बार समाचार सुनते थे। लेकिन आहिस्ता-आहिस्ता इसमें गिरावट आई है। आज

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"> के माध्यम से जिसको तो सुन लेते हैं, लेकिन समाचार सुनने की इच्छा नहीं रखते हैं। इसी प्रकार दूरदर्शन के कार्यक्रमों में भी गिरावट आई है। हमने ग्लैमर का नाम दिया और ग्लैमर के नाम से कार्यक्रम पेश किए।

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"> जिन प्रोग्रामों को सपरिवार नहीं देख सकते हैं तथा बाहर के चैनल भी आये हैं जिन पर हम कोई लगाम नहीं लगा सके।

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"> माननीय सभापति महोदय, आज आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन की गुणवत्ता बढ़ाने की बहुत जरूरत है क्योंकि आज प्रचार का सबसे बड़ा माध्यम आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन ही है। आज हाल यह है कि प्रिंट-मीडिया पर भी उतना भरोसा नहीं किया जा सकता जितना कि आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन पर किया जा सकता है। मुझे याद है कि गांव में अगर किसी समाचार की सच्चाई लोग जानना चाहते थे तो सबसे पहले बीबीसी लगाते थे और लोगों का विश्वास था कि बीबीसी की खबर सच्ची खबर होती है। लोगों को उस पर विश्वास था, उसकी सच्चाई पर विश्वास था। सरकार का प्रसार भारती एक एक साहसिक कदम है जिसके द्वारा मीडिया को स्वायत्तता दी जा रही है। लेकिन इसके साथ-साथ हमें इसके आर्थिक पहलू और गुणवत्ता पर भी ध्यान देना चाहिए। सरकार इस पर १६ सौ करोड़ रुपया प्रतिवर्ष खर्च करती है जबकि रे वैन्यू के तौर पर इसकी रिक्वरी ३९५ करोड़ रुपया है। इससे पता चलता है कि प्रतिवर्ष कितना बड़ी हानि होती है। जनता का जो पैसा टैक्स के रूप में आता है वह इस तरह से बर्बाद कर दिया जाये, यह कोई अच्छी बात नहीं है, इसका समुचित उपयोग होना चाहिए।

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१७.४७ बजे (श्री पी.एच. पांडियन पीठासीन हुए)

मैं तो यही कहूंगा कि यह एक बहुत अच्छा कदम है, लेकिन इसके साथ भेरे कुछ सुझाव भी हैं, जिन्हें मैं आपके सामने रखना चाहता हूँ। आज इन दोनों माध्यमों में गुणवत्ता की कमी है और राष्ट्र के लोगों की भावना को हम जनता तक ठीक ढंग से नहीं पहुंचा पा रहे हैं। इसकी जो क्रेडिबिलिटी जनता में होनी चाहिए वह नहीं है। इसकी महत्ता और गुणवत्ता को बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार को एक ब्रॉडकास्टिंग रेगुलेटरी अथॉरिटी भी बनानी चाहिए जो इसको कंट्रोल कर सके। सरकार अपना भी नियंत्रण रखे ताकि इसमें स्वच्छता न आने पाये, सामाजिक सरोकार भी इसका रहे। ब्रॉडकास्टिंग अथॉरिटी के रूप में वह काम करे। कभी हम लड़ पड़ते हैं कि उम्र बढ़ाई जाये या जैसे पीछे कोई समय-सीमा नहीं रखी गयी है या जैसे कहा गया कि इसमें जरूरत नहीं है कि कोई आदमी बाहर से आये। इसलिए इसमें एक रेगुलेटरी अथॉरिटी होनी चाहिए। अब अगर हम साइंस और टेक्नोलॉजी की जानकारी लेना चाहें तो हमारे को दूरदर्शन से नहीं मिलती है तो लोग बाहर के चैनल खोलकर देखते हैं। इसलिए इस तरह के प्रोग्राम भी आने चाहिए, ज्योग्राफिकल प्रोग्राम आने चाहिए। कम्युनिटी रिलेशन के प्रोग्राम जो बेशर्मा से ग्लैमर के नाम पर दिखाये जा रहे हैं उनमें सुधार होना चाहिए ताकि आम जनता तक एक मैसेज जाये और वह अपने इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया पर विश्वास कर सके। उससे हम सच्चाई जान सकते हैं, सीख ले सकते हैं और देश की एकता और अखंडता के बारे में अपने लोगों को मनबूली से आगे बढ़ाते हुए अपनी बात बता सकते हैं। इसलिए इस ओर सरकार का ध्यान जाना चाहिए। इन्होंने शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

"> डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह (बैशाली) : सभापति महोदय, हाल ही में आउट स्टैंडिंग पार्लियामेंटेरियन एवार्ड जयपाल रेड्डी जी को मिला। उन्हीं के द्वारा इस बहस की शुरुआत हुई। लोकतंत्र में चौथा खम्भा पत्रकारिता और मीडिया को माना गया है। यह जब तक स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष नहीं रहेगा तब तक लोकतंत्र मनबूत नहीं होगा। सारे काम इसी से चलते हैं। इसलिए महसूस किया गया कि सरकार के अधीन रेंडियो और टेलिविजन को स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष बनाया जाए। गांवों में भी यह धारणा है कि यहाँ के रेंडियो और टेलिविजन सही खबर नहीं देते जबकि बी.बी.सी. सही खबर देता है। हमें आपातकाल का समय याद है। उस समय रेंडियो में असली बात नहीं आती थी। गांव के लोग कहते थे कि बी.बी.सी. लगा कर खबर सुनी जाए। उस पर लोगों को विश्वास था। उसी से सोच चली और प्रसार भारती विधेयक लाया गया।

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"> रेड्डी साहब ने शुरु से लेकर अब तक की बात बताई। कहा जाता था कि गिल लाहब सख्त आदमी थे, किसी की पैरवी नहीं करते थे और किसी की बात नहीं मानते थे। उन्हें हटाने के लिए कानून बदल दिया। ऐसी चर्चा यहाँ भी हुई।

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"> सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री अरुण जेटली) : पहले उन्हें लाने के लिए कानून बदला गया।

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"> डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह : वह आपको सूट नहीं कर रहा था, इसलिए ऐसा हुआ। इस सरकार के चलते इस विभाग में अरुण जेटली जी तीसरे मंत्री हैं। पहले सुधमा जी गड़बड़ करने के कारण गईं। फिर प्रमोद महानजन जी का विभाग बदला गया। अब आप भी कुछ ऐसा ही कर रहे हैं। रोज टेलिविजन में दिखाई देते हैं। जब प्रधान मंत्री विपक्ष में थे तो कहते थे कि इन्दिरा जी को रोज टेलिविजन में दिखाया जाता है और देवी दर्शन कराए जाते हैं। शायद आपको यह बात याद नहीं है।

">... (व्यवधान)

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"> आप ब्राह्मण बुद्धि का अभ्यास करिए। आप उसे भूल गए हैं।

">... (व्यवधान)

">वैशाली जनतंत्र का जन्मदाता है। जब दुनिया में कहीं लोकतंत्र नहीं था, उस समय वहां लोकतंत्र था। तीन हजार वर्ष पहले वहां लिच्छवी गणतंत्र था। हमें इसका गौरव प्राप्त है। हमने इब्राहिम लिंकन से लोकतंत्र नहीं सीखा। १८९८ में केरल में दो सदीय व्यवस्था हुई। जब बिहार और उड़ीसा एक थे, उस समय बिहार में १९१२ में काउंसिल का गठन हुआ था।">

"> इनको गलत सिखाकर उधर से खड़ा कर दिया। तीन आदिमियों ने अंटशंट लिखा दिया। जब श्री जयपाल जी ने कहा कि गोइबल का कहना था कि यदि कहीं कोई बात दस बार असत्य कही जाये तो वह सच हो जाती है। अब गोइबल और मैकावली को हम लोग असत्य कहने वाले बोलते हैं। ये लोग भी फासिस्ट हैं और इन लोगों का सच्चाई पर कोई विश्वास नहीं है।

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"> सभापति महोदय, गिल को हटाने के लिये कानून बनाया गया। गिल को हटा दिया गया लेकिन उसकी जगह कोई अच्छा आदमी बहाल नहीं किया गया, अभी तक क्यों नहीं किया गया, आपके पास कोई जवाब हो तो दीजिये। श्री महाजन ने पिछली लोकसभा में जवाब दिया था और उन्होंने कहा कि हम कुछ नहीं करते। हम लोगों को यह जानकारी है कि कोई मि. तिवारी या मि. त्रिवेणी, जो भी हो, वे जाकर बैठते थे और न्यूज़ निकालते थे जिसे वे पढ़ लेते और तब कहते थे कि ठीक है। उसके बाद ही न्यूज़ प्रसारित होता था। हमारे बिहार में भिखारी ठाकुर हुये हैं। उनकी एक कविता थी:

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"> हकूमत के हाथी के दांत हैं दो,

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"> खाने के दो असर, दिखाये दो असर ॥

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"> जैसा श्री रूपचंद पाल ने कहा कि यह प्रसार भारती भी डबल फेस का है। कहने को तो आटोनमी दे दिया लेकिन ये लोग अपने मन मुताबिक न्यूज़ प्रसारण का काम कराते हैं। हमारा इन पर यह आरोप है कि इनका दोहरा मापदंड है क्योंकि कहने को कुछ है और करने को कुछ है। कहने को तो आटोनमी है जिसका मतलब है कि स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष रहे लेकिन पार्लियामेंट में कहा कि हम कुछ नहीं कर सकते। इसमें मंत्री का कोई अधिकार नहीं है। ऐसे ही इनका काम सीरियल्स में रहता है। इसमें करोड़ों रुपये का घोटाला हुआ है। जो मंजूर होने का नहीं, वे मंजूर कर लिये गये और जो मंजूर होने को थे, उनको रिजेक्ट कर दिया गया। अगर इस सब की जांच हो जाये तो सब के सब धरे रह जायेंगे और कोई बचेगा नहीं। इसलिये प्रसार भारती को आटोनमी देने के नाम पर एक से एक जवाब देंगे। फिर क्यों एक एडीशनल सैक्रेट्री वहां रखे हुये हैं, फिर आटोनमी कहां रहेगी? इसीलिये प्रसार भारती की विश्वसनीयता खतरों में है। लोगों को भी इसमें संदेह है। जब प्रसार भारती बना था तो उस समय बी.बी.सी. की तरह रिप्यूटेड स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष रखे जाने की बात की गई थी कि इससे लोगों को सच्चाई की जानकारी मिलेगी लेकिन आज के समय में इस पर कोई भरोसा नहीं है। हम यह देख रहे हैं कि बदलीकरण हो रहा है लेकिन हेरा-फेरी हो रही है। इसलिये जब हम लोगों का राज बना था, उस समय यह सपना था कि प्रसार भारती का उद्देश्य आटोनमी होना था जिसकी विश्वसनीयता रहेगी, उसमें सरकार का हस्तक्षेप नहीं होगा लेकिन आज सरकार उसमें हस्तक्षेप कर रही है।

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"> सभापति महोदय, यदि आज दूरदर्शन और रेडियो दोनों पर न्यूज़ देखा या सुना जाये तो मालूम होगा कि सरकार के मंत्री लोग अपना प्रचार कराते हैं। यह ठीक बात है लेकिन प्रधानमंत्री की मर्यादा के बाद ये मंत्री अपना नम्बर लगाते हैं। वोटों के समय तो टी.वी. और रेडियो ने भाट की तरह काम किया है। हमारे बिहार में भाट उन लोगों को रखा जाता था जो राजा की जय जय करते थे। उसी तरह से इन लोगों ने एकतरफा प्रचार अपनी पार्टी के लिये किया। भानुषा की सरकार ने षडयंत्र किया और इसीलिये हम लोगों का विश्वास इन पर से उठ गया है। जनता का विश्वास भी उठ गया है। जब लोगों का मीडिया पर विश्वास उठ जायेगा और सरकार जब कहेगी कि स्टार टी.वी. देखिये और कभी कहेगी कि ज़ी न्यूज़ देखिये क्योंकि इन लोगों का उनसे लाकबानी है। वे लोग बहुत ठीक नहीं करते हैं। लेकिन कभी कभी तो वाजिब दिखाई दे जाते हैं। लेकिन यह बहुत खतरनाक बात है। इस कारण से हम लोग कहते हैं कि सदन का उस पर कोई कंट्रोल नहीं रहे, सरकार का भी नहीं। यदि सरकार अपनी तरह से करेगी तो हम लोगों में बड़ा भारी असंतोष रहेगा, आम लोगों को असंतोष होगा। इसलिये चाहेंगे कि जिस तरह से बी.बी.सी. का रेपुटेशन है, वैसा प्रसार भारती का हो जाये लेकिन हमें इन पर भरोसा नहीं है। इन से हम लोग अपेक्षा भी नहीं करते हैं।

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">18.00 hrs.

"> कैसे करेंगे। कानून बदलकर इन्होंने अभी तक नहीं किया। यह जवाब दे दें, दो वर्ष बीत गये हैं, मंत्री बदल रहे हैं, अफसर लोगों का उसमें कारोबार थम रहा है। इसलिए हम इतना कहेंगे कि श्री जयपाल रेड्डी साहब ने जो सवाल उठाये हैं, यह उसका जवाब दें। हॉशियार मंत्री हैं, वकील हैं, उल्टा-सीधा करने में माहिर होंगे, वैसा ही करेंगे। लेकिन आम लोगों में यह धारणा है, इसलिए हम चाहेंगे कि आम लोगों की जो धारणा है कि इसकी सफाई हो, मीडिया स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष रहे। जब लोकतंत्र का चौथा खम्भा मजबूत रहेगा तो लोकतंत्र भी मजबूत रहेगा, ऐसा हमारा विश्वास है। इतना कहकर मैं अपना वक्तव्य समाप्त करता हूँ।

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">MR. CHAIRMAN : Next speaker is Dr. Beatrix D'Souza.

">SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): The time of the sitting has to be extended, Sir.

">MR. CHAIRMAN : The time allotted for this discussion was two hours. It is already over. With the consent of the House, we extend the time. How much time is required to complete this discussion? The hon. Speaker has said that today we have to complete it.

"> श्री प्रभुनाथ सिंह (महाराजगंज, बिहार) : सभापति महोदय, इसे कल के लिए जारी रखिये।

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">MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Speaker has said that today itself we should complete the discussion on this subject. It was agreed also that this discussion would be completed today. It is for the House to decide how much time it wants. I think one hour is sufficient.

"> कृंवर अखिलेश सिंह (महाराजगंज, उ.प्र.) : सभापति महोदय, आज हाउस एडजर्न कर दीजिए और इसे कल जारी कर दीजिए।

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"> श्री प्रभुनाथ सिंह : आज साढ़े छः बजे सिंचाई विभाग की महत्वपूर्ण मीटिंग है, इसे कल के लिए कांटीन्यू कर दीजिए। हम लोगों को मीटिंग में जाना है।

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">MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Minister be able to complete his reply by 6.30 p.m.?

">THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): If I get about fifteen to twenty minutes, I will complete my reply.

">...(Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: There are only two more speakers. These names have been given by the hon. Speaker. If new names are to be included, it will become difficult.

">(Interruptions)

">SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (SILCHAR): Who are the two speakers? From our side, Shri K.P. Singh Deo will have to speak.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Rashid Alvi and Shri K.P. Singh Deo are to speak. But this discussion will have to be completed today itself. In the Business Advisory Committee meeting also a decision was taken that this discussion would be completed today because tomorrow we have to pass three-four Bills.

"> श्री प्रभुनाथ सिंह : जब बिहार, बंगाल और उत्तर प्रदेश के लोग चले जायेंगे तो हाउस किस पर चलायेंगे। हम सभी लोगों को मीटिंग में जाना है। आज साढ़े छः बजे मीटिंग रखाई गई है।

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">MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall we finish it by 6.30 p.m.? I have called upon Dr. Beatrix D'Souza to speak. She is on her legs. From each party at least one Member has spoken, I think.

">SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): I have even mentioned in my speech that there is a second speaker from our Party and therefore I am taking less time.

"> There is another speaker Shri Suresh Kurup. He has to speak from our side. You cannot deny this opportunity to us..(Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already consumed much time. I do not think time is transferrable like that.

"> ... (Interruptions)

">DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA (NOMINATED): Sir, you have called my name...(Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it is agreed that we extend the time up to 6.30 p.m.

"> Now Dr. (Shrimati) Beatrix D'Souza to speak.

">DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA (NOMINATED): Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I would like to state that Shri Jaipal Reddy has made a powerful plea for autonomy. I believe that autonomy is desirable when there is a possibility of any Government misusing the Governmental machinery. But I would like to make one thing very clear. The Government did not muzzle the media during the Emergency. Also, autonomy leads to credibility.

"> I also agree with Shri Jaipal Reddy when he says that eminent people of various disciplines should be appointed to the Expert Committee and not media persons because of professionalism. We do need technical expertise alone. Media people also have their own political loyalties. But I am not going to talk on that subject.

"> The enormous potential of the Doordarshan and the All India Radio as vehicles of social change has not been sufficiently exploited...(Interruptions) Nearly, every home has a television. Transistors are very cheap. But I am talking particularly about women. Women have been entertained. But they have not been informed about things that benefit them personally. Even educated women are woefully ignorant of their legal rights. I believe that the All India Radio and the Doordarshan could become a channel for the spread of legal literacy among women. For example, a woman does not know that she cannot be arrested after 6 p.m.; that she cannot stay in the police station after that time. Women do not know where to report a rape and where to go for reporting sexual harassment. They also do not know where to go and report about harassment regarding divorce; how to get consumer protection and services available on the hot-line provided by the NGOs. These should also be publicised.

"> I was on the Science and Technology Committee last year. During the scare about adulterated mustard oil, we were shown a very simple device in which the purity of the mustard oil could be tested. But, unfortunately, the general public were not aware of this very simple method and mustard oil was sold. My suggestion to the hon. Minister is to have a one-liner flash news so that people are

informed about various important matters. For example, pensioners need to know when pension is being revised. People need to know about when to get ration cards and when to have vaccination etc. Perhaps, the hon. Minister could enlist the services of film-stars and cricketers. I believe that he himself is a cricket fan.

"> Nowadays, on Doordarshan, sale of washing machines and refrigerators is promoted. After selling washing machines and refrigerators, they could also tell us something about issues of social importance. In fact, I would suggest to the hon. Minister that all advertisements accepted by Doordarshan and All-India Radio should compulsorily contain a one-liner giving us information. After all, all the consumer advertisements are aimed at women consumers. Let us get something which is socially relevant after they take our money. There is also a need for children's programmes. In Britain, they have a very educative programme called the "Sesame Street" where children are educated while they have been entertained.

"> We should have some indigenous programme on those lines, so that Doordarshan enters into the classroom, especially the rural classroom. Then, we also need programmes for senior citizens. We need programmes to inform senior citizens about health care etc. and we need programmes for people who stay at home.

"> Sir, the hon. Minister became a T.V. personality during the elections and, I am sure, he knows the power of the visual media. I am very sure that he would take all my suggestions into consideration.

">SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (DHENKANAL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to compliment the Minister for presiding over a Ministry which, in my three decades of experience in Parliament, I thought, I had the privilege to be in-charge of and which is one of the best Ministries, that is, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The people working in Doordarshan and Akashvani as well as in the Field Publicity Units, the Song and Drama Division, the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, the Films Division and the Photo Division have been doing excellent work. Doordarshan and Akashvani have been the leaders in many fields where advanced countries like America and Japan were no comparison. The innovative skills of Doordarshan and All India Radio can be borne out by the fact that many of them who have had their grounding in Akashvani and Doordarshan are today occupying very high places in the competitors of Doordarshan, that is, Star T.V., Zee T.V. and many other satellite television channels.

"> Sir, I compliment Shri Jaipal Reddy because he has the courage of conviction and he has been consistent throughout, whether he has been on this side of the House or on that side of the House, belying the words of Sir Winston Churchill who had said:

"> "Consistency in politics is the asset of an ass."

"> But in spite of that, he has the courage of conviction and the Congress Party, in its Election Manifesto in 1991, had committed itself to the functioning of Doordarshan and All India Radio as autonomous bodies and in competition with other professional channels.

"> Sir, the reach of Akashvani and Doordarshan is unparalleled in the world and it is all due to the fact that the staff, the engineers and the people who have been manning these two organisations have brought them to that level. Today, 90 per cent of our country is covered by Doordarshan and 98 per cent of the country is reached by All India Radio. Today, All India Radio is even thinking of sky radio, satellite radio and they are still the pioneers in many fields. Today, Doordarshan is the pioneer even before America in digital compression video technique where Doordarshan had 17 channels and they had the capacity of 85 channels. At one time, as an experiment, we were beaming five different channels to Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab when militancy was at its peak. This could happen only because there was a lot of autonomy amongst the technical staff. They could compete and they could get the funds required. But if we, 750 Members of Parliament, feel that we are the repository of all wisdom and that we can also be ahead of technology and technological innovations, we will be committing a sad mistake.

Sir, when Shri Jaipal Reddy was there in the Rajya Sabha, he used to be very active and some of my colleagues, who are sitting on the other side now, like Shri Pramod Mahajan and Shrimati Sushma Swaraj used to raise the question of autonomy. At that time, there was an order, a direction from the Chair of Dr. Najma Heptulla that Doordarshan and Akashvani should be freed from the controls of the Government because technology had made irrelevant any law or any control or any regulation.

In 1990, there was a combined wisdom of this Parliament. It was unanimously decided at that time that we must have a Prasar Bharati Board which should be free from Governmental and bureaucratic control. But what it requires is also functional autonomy by the people who are running it.

Today, probably 136 satellite channels are beaming into India. If Doordarshan, Akashvani and Prasar Bharati have to be relevant in Indian conditions and face the competition as a result of liberalisation, then they should have professionals. Along with autonomy and professionalism, it requires accountability and responsibility to Parliament. There are no two opinions about it.

I recall that Dr. Manmohan Singh, as the Finance Minister, threatened that he would not give a single paise to Information and Broadcasting Ministry, and that Doordarshan and Akashvani must generate its own revenue. Therefore, Doordarshan and Akashvani were innovative and they were about to get Rs. 1,000 crore. Their operating expenses at that time was Rs. 624 crore. I am talking about five years back. At that time, their income was Rs. 500 crore. But when this move was made and today when they were about to be self-sufficient, then we found the upheavals of the Prasar Bharati Board running into trouble with the Government and with various other things. So, I would like to pose a question to hon. Minister. I feel that he has an open mind. The Prasar Bharati Board should be strengthened rather than be weakened. It should be strengthened by the professional people. In fact, we have been following a pattern here that some one who is an expert in health, does not become the Health Minister; some one who is an expert in defence, does not become the Defence Minister so that objectivity comes and not subjectivity. In fact, we had one of the finest engineers here who became a Minister of his Department but unfortunately, the Ministry did not function as well because subjectivity went in and objectivity was sacrificed at the altar. Therefore, professionalism and autonomy along with accountability and responsibility to Parliament are important because ours is a Parliamentary democracy.

Sir, without accountability, we will be facing criticisms. Criticisms are nothing new. When people sit on this side, they have a different point of view. When they go to the other side, they have a different point of view. We have been at the receiving end sometimes when

we sit there and when we come to this side, we hear different voices from that side. Therefore, there will be a criticism about the credibility of Doordarshan and Akashvani as compared to BBC. In fact, there are any number of certificates by international agencies, where they have praised Doordarshan and Akashvani in the highest of terms, whether it was sports, whether it was the burning of Charar-e-Sharief, whether it was the Asian Games or whether it was the live telecast of any other event. Therefore, such a fine organisation requires the support of the Parliament. Then only, it can function in today's technological revolution.

We have missed the Industrial Revolution. Let us not miss out the Information Revolution. For that, we have to give them full autonomy, free from the control of Parliament, both the Government and bureaucracy but they must be accountable. After all, ours is a Parliamentary democracy. We are all accountable to the people. So, this organisation, where the national resource of about Rs. 60,000 crore has been pumped in over the last fifty years, must be accountable to Parliament, must be responsible to Parliament but they must have full functional autonomy without any hindrance or without any interference from any politician or any bureaucrat because we are not experts.

> श्री राशिद अलवी (अमरोहा) : समापति महोदय, मैं आपका शुक्रगुजार हूँ कि आपने मुझे प्रसार भारती के फंक्शन पर बोलने का मौका मुहैया किया। दुनिया की तारीख गवाह है।

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> दुनिया में जितने डिक्टेटर हुए, उन्होंने सबसे पहले यह कोशिश की कि उनके हाथों में मीडिया रहना चाहिए, उनके हाथों में रेडियो और टेलीविजन रहना चाहिए। आज भी दुनिया के अंदर बहुत सी जगहों पर किसी न किसी सूरत में डिक्टेटरशिप मौजूद है। जिन देशों में इस तरह का सिस्टम है, वहाँ पर भी चाहे वह टेलीविजन हो या रेडियो हो, वह सरकार के अधीन है, डिक्टेटर के अधीन है। जो वे चाहते हैं वही टेलीविजन और रेडियो में आता है।

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> मुझे अफसोस के साथ कहना पड़ता है इस देश के अंदर जो भी पार्टी इधर बैठती (विपक्ष में) है तो दूरदर्शन और ऑल इंडिया रेडियो की ऑटोनॉमी की बात करती है, जब वह पार्टी उधर (सरकार में) चली जाती है तो उसे यह महसूस होता है कि अगर दूरदर्शन और ऑल इंडिया रेडियो स्वतंत्र कर दिए तो हमारे लिए दुश्वारियाँ खड़ी हो जाएंगी। यह कोई नई बात नहीं है। इस देश के अंदर एक ही परिवार ३८-४० साल तक लगातार राज में रहा। वह इसलिए रहा कि वे लोग अच्छी तरह से जानते थे कि मीडिया को किस तरह से इस्तेमाल करना चाहिए, रेडियो और टी.वी. को किस तरह से इस्तेमाल करना चाहिए। इससे बड़ी सच्चाई कोई और नहीं हो सकती।

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> श्री श्रीप्रकाश जायसवाल (कानपुर): यह गलत बात है।

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> श्री राशिद अलवी : आप मना कर दीजिए कि ३८ साल तक एक परिवार का राज नहीं रहा।

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> श्री श्रीप्रकाश जायसवाल : लेकिन उनकी वजह से ऐसा होता रहा, यह आरोप नहीं लगाना चाहिए।

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> श्री राशिद अलवी : चूंकि समय कम है इसलिए मैं ज्यादा समय नहीं लेना चाहता, लेकिन उनके समय में ऐसा हुआ है कि दूरदर्शन और रेडियो इस देश का नहीं लगता था, इस परिवार का लगता था। इस देश के प्रधान मंत्री नरसिंह राव जी थे। उस समय जो सरकार की तरफ से विज्ञापन आते थे, वे भी ऐसे होते थे जैसे कांग्रेस के विज्ञापन हो। इस देश के अंदर ऐसा लगता था, जब उनकी सरकार थी, कि हमें सांस लेने का अख्तियार भी प्रधान मंत्री जी ने दे रखा है। मैं यह बात नहीं कहना चाहता था, लेकिन आप खड़े होकर वकालत कर रहे थे इसलिए कह रहा हूँ। मेरा तर्जुमा है कि जो भी पार्टी विरोध में रहती है, वह चाहती है कि टी.वी. और रेडियो स्वतंत्र होना चाहिए। जब वह सरकार में चली जाती है तो कहती है कि इसको ऑटोनॉमी मिलनी चाहिए।

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> यह जनाबे शेख का फलसफा है अजीब सारे जहाँ से

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> जो यहाँ पीऊँ तो हराम है, जो वहाँ पीऊँ तो हलाल है।

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> यहाँ पर दूसरा अंदाजे फिक्क है, वहाँ पर दूसरा अंदाजे फिक्क है। मैं चाहूँगा कि जो आज का प्रसार भारती है, अरूण जेटली जी हमारे पुराने मित्र हैं, उन्होंने मेरे से कुछ साल पहले वकालत शुरू की थी, क्योंकि जब मैंने जाइन किया तो वे वकालत कर रहे थे, मैं उनकी इज्जत करता हूँ, लेकिन मैं आपके माध्यम से उनसे दुख के साथ कहना चाहता हूँ कि आज दूरदर्शन के अंदर आम जनता का वह विश्वास नहीं है, जो होना चाहिए। यह बात कही जा रही है कि बी.बी.सी. के साथ कम्पेयर नहीं करना चाहिए। अभी मेरे एक दोस्त ने कहा कि बहुत सारे अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रमाण पत्र दूरदर्शन को मिले हैं, मूमकिन है कि मिले होंगे, मैं उसमें नहीं जाना चाहता, लेकिन आम जनता दूरदर्शन के बारे में क्या सोचती है, बी.बी.सी. के बारे में क्या सोचती है, यह ध्यान देने की बात है। आज आम आदमी बी.बी.सी. पर ज्यादा भरोसा करता है, दूरदर्शन पर कम करता है। मुझे माफ़ करेंगे, दूरदर्शन और ऑल इंडिया रेडियो से वही सब कुछ अनाउंस होता है जो आज की सरकार चाहती है। मैंने कभी खबरों में यह नहीं सुना और दूरदर्शन पर यह नहीं देखा या सुना कि बाबरी मस्जिद गिर गई, हमेशा यही सुना है कि वहाँ पर एक ढाँचा था, जिसको खत्म कर दिया गया। यह एक सोची-समझी साजिश है। उसीके तहत दूरदर्शन और ऑल इंडिया रेडियो आज काम कर रहे हैं। मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि इस सिलसिले में एक कामिग्रहोसिव बिल आना चाहिए। उसमें न सिर्फ यहाँ की प्रसार भारती स्वतंत्रता से काम करे, बल्कि यह भी बहुत जरूरी है कि इस देश की जो तहजीब और तमदुन है, उसको इनटैक रखें। आज इस देश के अंदर जो मुख्तलिफ़ चैनल्स काम कर रहे हैं, उनमें जिस तरीके के प्रोग्राम दिए जा रहे हैं।

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"> इस मुल्क की तहजीब और तमहुद के खिलाफ है। मैं समझने में कासीर हूँ कि हिन्दी मूवीज दिखाई जायेगी, तो उनका कोई दूसरा मापदंड होगा और जब अंग्रेजी मूवीज दिखाई जायेगी, तो दूसरा मापदंड होगा। देखने वाले वही लोग हिन्दुस्तानी हैं। इसलिए मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि एक कामिप्रहैसिव बिल आना चाहिए, जिसके अन्दर हमारी तहजीब और तमहुद इन्टेक्ट होना चाहिए।

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">MR. CHAIRMAN : Kindly conclude now. You were allotted three minutes, I have given you five minutes.

"> श्री राशिद अल्वी : मैं ज्यादा बक्त न लते हुए, एक बात और कहना चाहता हूँ। मैं जितने भी ब्राडकास्टिंग मिनिस्टर्स हुए हैं, उनके द्वारा दिए गए कन्ट्रॉलिंग स्टेटमेंट्स में नहीं जाना चाहता हूँ, लेकिन एक बात जरूर कहना चाहता हूँ। भगवान कृष्ण ने गीता के अन्दर कहा है - राजनीति दो तरीके की होती है, एक राजा के लिए और दूसरी देश के लिए। भगवान कृष्ण ने कहा था, जब राजनीति राजा के लिए की जाती है, तो निष्ठा अपना अर्थ खो देती है। जब निष्ठा अपना अर्थ खो देती है, तो सच्चाई अपना मतलब खो देती है और जब सच्चाई अपना मतलब खो देती है, तो सिर्फ झूठ का राज होता है और उसके अलावा किसी और का राज नहीं होता है। इसलिये मैं जेटली जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि राजनीति देश के लिये करे, राजा के लिये नहीं। इसलिए मैं चाहूंगा कि एक कामिप्रहैसिव बिल लाना चाहिए, ताकि प्रसार भारती न सिर्फ इन्डिपेंडेंटली काम करे, बल्कि देश को नजर आए कि वह इन्डिपेंडेंटली काम कर रही है तथा उसके अन्दर तमाम तहजीब और तमहुद कवर करने चाहिए।

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">SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN (PERIYAKULAM): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in this debate.

"> Advertisements is the basic resource on which the television channels survive. But certain television channels have monopolised on the advertisements over the years to the disadvantage of other channels. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to take necessary steps to bring a legislation on the lines of Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 for the prevalence of the healthy trend in television industry. Thank you, Sir.

"> श्री धर्म राज सिंह पटेल (फूलपुर) : समापति महोदय, मैं लोकसभा में पहली बार चुनकर आया हूँ और मैं प्रसार भारती के कार्यकरण के विषय में अपनी धारणा सदन के सामने रखना चाहता हूँ।

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"> महोदय, आपातकाल के समय में संसद में जो भी राय होती रही या अखबारों के माध्यम से हम सुनते रहे कि आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन पर कांग्रेस का नियन्त्रण है। इसी तरह से संयुक्त मोर्चे की सरकार में भारतीय जनता पार्टी और सारे दलों ने लड़ाई लड़ी थी कि दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी को स्वतन्त्र किया जाएगा। किसी तरह से आपातकाल खत्म हुआ, कांग्रेस का राज खत्म हुआ और संयुक्त मोर्चे की सरकार आई, तो निश्चित रूप से दूरदर्शन ने स्वतन्त्र रूप से काम किया और जनता को उस विषय वास हुआ। लेकिन अब जब भारतीय जनता पार्टी की सरकार आ गई है, तो दो साल से हम लगातार देख रहे हैं कि

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"> और रेडियो पर जो भी विश्लेषक आते हैं और विभिन्न विषयों पर विश्लेषण करते हैं, वे भारतीय जनता पार्टी के समर्थक होते हैं। उन्हीं समर्थकों को बुलाकर डिस्कशन कराया जाता है।

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">TV

"> और रेडियो पर हम सुनते हैं, उन्हीं वैज्ञानिकों को बुलाया जाता है, जो भारतीय जनता पार्टी के समर्थक हों या कांग्रेस के समर्थक हों, लेकिन कभी भी तीसरी फोर्स या उसके समर्थकों को नहीं बुलाया जाता है।

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"> इसीलिए यह धारणा बनती है कि भारतीय जनता पार्टी की नीयत भी खराब है। इसका प्रमाण चुनाव के दौरान दिखाई पड़ा जब भारतीय जनता पार्टी की सरकार थी। रेडियो और टेलीविजन से बराबर यह प्रचार किया जाता रहा कि समाजवादी पार्टी इस देश में समाप्त हो गयी है और वह एक-दो सीटों से ज्यादा जीत नहीं पायेगी। देश का मुसलमान समाजवादी पार्टी छोड़कर चला गया है। प्रसार भारती के संबंध में मैंने अरूण शौरी जी का भी इंटरव्यू पढ़ा है। मैं समझता हूँ कि इनके मंत्री रहते हुए दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी निष्पक्ष काम कर पायेगे, इसमें मुझे संदेह है। भारतीय जनता पार्टी तीसरी फोर्स को समाप्त करने के लिए पूरी कोशिश करती रही है और आगे भी करती रहेगी। इसलिए मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से निवेदन करूंगा कि यह जो इसको लाने की कोशिश की जा रही है और माननीय जयपाल रेड्डी जी ने जो विचार के लिए इसको रखा है, उसको स्वीकार किया जाये और आगे एक विशेषज्ञ समिति बनाई जाये जिसमें सारी पार्टियों के लोग हों। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

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">MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Member Shri Suresh Kurup to speak. Shri Kurup, your Party was allotted seven minutes. Shri Rup Chand Pal has consumed more time. You have been given a bonus minute.

">SHRI SURESH KURUP (KOTTAYAM): Sir, it is the discretion of the Chair.

"> Respected Chairman, Sir, it has been a long and painful endeavour to all the right-thinking persons in this country that we should utilise AIR and Doordarshan for stabilising our democratic setup and also for bettering the millions of illiterate poor people of our country. We are on the threshold of the next millennium and the world has already sunk to a global village. Our electronic media is facing its biggest challenge. Our skies are already open and various TV channels are competing with each other.

"> Now what are the rules of the game here? Credible and reliable information and also wide variety of entertainment are the new rules of the broadcasting regime. Here profit-driven and performance-oriented companies are competing with each other for influencing the mind and heart of the people.

"> In this environment, what should be the role of our electronic media apart from entertainment in which, of course, they have to compete successfully with other TV channels? They have a great responsibility on their shoulders. This is the only medium which can rise to the millions of illiterate masses of our country because illiteracy is not a bar for hearing the radio and viewing television.

"> The duty of AIR and Doordarshan is to inform, educate and entertain. My humble submission is that competition with other TV channels should not be at the cost of public service broadcasting. Already the time earmarked for public service broadcasting is being reduced. In a country like India, public service broadcasting should not be sacrificed at the altar of commercialisation. The public service broadcasting cannot be led by the market because, as I pointed out earlier, half of our population is out of the market, beyond the market.

"> So, whatever material that you want to reach the poor farmers to improve the quality of their life can only be through public service broadcasting. Here lies the main difference between Doordarshan and other TV channels. It should communicate to each and every citizen of our country. In this scenario, in what way should AIR and Doordarshan function? It is already pointed out that it was the dream of Jawaharlal Nehru that AIR should be modelled like BBC, with only broad Government control and wide autonomy. All these years, we have seen the negation of this idea. It was during emergency, we witnessed the naked assault on the independence of AIR and Doordarshan in this country. So, after emergency, the new ruling dispensation could not back out from the commitment given to the people regarding conferring of autonomy to AIR and Doordarshan. It was in this atmosphere that B.G. Verghese Committee was appointed, 20 years have lapsed since that Committee presented its Report, and everyone knows that none of its recommendations were implemented. It was a difficult path for AIR and Doordarshan to tread to reach the gates of autonomy.

"> It was a genuine attempt to confer autonomy to AIR and Doordarshan that the Prasar Bharati Act of 1990 was passed. But again, the country had to wait for another non-Congress Government for conferring the autonomy to the electronic media. It goes to the credit of my esteemed colleague, Shri Jaipal Reddy ... (Interruptions)

">SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (DHENKANAL): Then he was a former Congressman, and now he is a Congressman.

">SHRI SURESH KURUP : He is always a Congressman at heart. He was the only Broadcasting Minister in this country who showed the political will and conviction to confer genuine autonomy to AIR and Doordarshan by constituting the Prasar Bharati Board and making it autonomous. In any case, it is a pleasure and pious obligation to salute him.

"> As everyone knows, the breath of fresh air that Shri Jaipal Reddy could infuse into the organisation could not last long. Again, it has degraded into the level of any ordinary Government department. This Government's policy towards this organisation, and the treatment that is in store for AIR and Doordarshan became evident when the Government made Romila Thapar and Rajendra Yadav to retire. Each and every speaker has referred about it. But what were the criteria used for this retirement? The only criteria used was that they were voices of dissent, as far as the Government is concerned. The Government do not want any independent-minded intellectual in this Board. They want to fill this institution with loyal saffronites. If we take the Government's attitude at its face value that as per the Act, after every two years two members have to retire, even then there was one vacancy already existing. That was created because Shri A. Padmanabhaiah had become the Governor. So, the need, if at all there was any need, was only for one member to retire. This itself shows that the Government's argument is spurious. This is part of a systematic organised attempt by BJP to saffronise all the key areas in the country. Already, textbooks are being rewritten, history books are trampled with, so also Prasar Bharati.

A new argument is being floated by the Government that the question of autonomy does not arise now, since Doordarshan is not the only network functioning in the country. I am surprised to see that a person like Shri Nitish Sengupta has also mentioned about that argument. This is a very deceiving argument. Since many other TV channels are already in the country, it is most important that Doordarshan and AIR should be autonomous.

It should be well-managed. Doordarshan may be owned by the Government but it should not be controlled by the Government on a day to day basis.

Sir, the offices of the Doordarshan and All India Radio should not be subordinate to the Shastri Bhawan only. They should be independent entities. There are different broadcasting systems in every part of the world which are owned and controlled by the Government, but those Governments broadly direct the organisations. It is only through this type of an autonomy that the Doordarshan can effectively compete with other channels in the country and reach the people

"> श्री सुरेश रामराव जाधव (परभनी) : समापति महोदय, नियम ११३ के अधीन प्रसार भारती के कार्यकरण के संबंध में सदन में चर्चा हो रही है। हमारे मंत्री महोदय सक्षम हैं और हमें आशा है कि वे दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी का ढांचा बदलने के लिये कारगर और मजबूत कदम उठावेंगे। अब तक भारत में प्राइवेट चैनल आ गये हैं लेकिन हमें प्रसार भारती के वर्तमान ढांचे को भी मजबूत बनाना होगा। प्रसार भारती में दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी के प्रचार कार्यों में कितना हिस्सा है, यह भी सोचने की बात है। हमारी सरकार भविष्य में दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी का स्वरूप कैसे बदलेगी, उसको कैसे बदलना होगा, मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा। प्रसार भारती के पुनर्गठन के लिये आपने तीन लोगों की एक कमेटी का गठन किया है। इसका कार्यकाल कितना होगा और यह कमेटी अपनी रिपोर्ट कब तक देगी, मुझे आशा है कि चर्चा के बाद माननीय मंत्री जी अपने उत्तर में सदन को अवगत करेंगे।

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"> समापति महोदय, मुख्य सवाल दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी की स्वायत्तता का है। मेरा मानना है कि यदि प्रसार भारती को कारगर ढंग से लागू किया जायेगा तो निश्चित रूप से सूचना माध्यमों की गुणवत्ता को मजबूत किया जा सकेगा। प्रसार भारती की विश्वसनीयता कैसे होगी, भारत सरकार भविष्य में दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी का प्रसार क्षेत्र बढ़ाने के लिये क्या करेगी, यह भी एक महत्वपूर्ण सवाल है। प्रसार भारती के अंतर्गत दूरदर्शन और रेडियो पर ग्रामीण भारत का दर्शन होना बहुत जरूरी है, इसमें चाहे स्वास्थ्य हो या शिक्षा हो।

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"> चाहे स्वास्थ्य हो, चाहे शिक्षा हो, हमारा देश विविधता वाला देश है, इस देश में अनेकों भाषाएं हैं, लेकिन जो स्थानीय भाषाएं हैं, उनके लिए भी दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी को ज्यादा से ज्यादा समय देने की जरूरत है। विशेष रूप से जो मराठी में प्रोग्राम चलते हैं, उनके लिए दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी ज्यादा से ज्यादा समय बढ़ाने की कोशिश करे। इतना कहकर मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

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"> श्री हरीभाऊ शंकर महाले (मालेगांव) : सभापति महोदय, आपने मुझे बोलने का समय दिया, उसके लिए मैं आपका धन्यवाद करता हूँ। आज से दस दिन के बाद हम सब लोग २०००वें वर्ष में पदार्पण करेंगे। लेकिन उस पदार्पण का क्या महत्व है, जब देश में ५० प्रतिशत लोग निरक्षर हों। कुपोषण के कारण जगह-जगह लोग मारे जा रहे हैं। कई-कई विभागों में ३८ नये पैसे दो आदमियों की आमदनी है, ऐसी स्थिति हमारे देश की है। कितने ही किसान कर्जा वापिस न करने के कारण आत्महत्या कर रहे हैं। यह सच है कि हमारा देश ७० फीसदी किसानों का देश है। लेकिन उनके बारे में दूरदर्शन पर कोई बात नहीं आती है। खाली बड़े-बड़े लोगों के चेहरे-मोहरे आते हैं कि ये लोग यह करते हैं, वह करते हैं। क्या कहीं सच बात भी आती है? कई स्थानों पर सड़कें नहीं हैं, रेल तो दूर की बात है। कोई सुविधा नहीं है। आदिम जाति विभाग में १९८० में फॉरेस्ट कानून बना, उस कानून की वजह से विकास का काम ठप हो गया है। क्या दूरदर्शन वाले कभी वहां गये हैं, क्या दूरदर्शन के बाबू कभी उधर गये हैं, क्या कभी उन्होंने वहां जाकर देखा है कि क्या हालत है। महोदय, मैं दूरदर्शन के बारे में इतना कहूंगा कि जो तालाब रखता है, वह ज्यादा पानी पीयेगा, लेकिन क्या यह तालाब औरों के लिए नहीं है। सरकार सभी के लिए होती है और उसे इस बारे में सोचना चाहिए। मैं आपके माध्यम से एक बात कहना चाहता हूँ कि बाबासाहेब अम्बेडकर ने सीं वधान बनाया ... (व्यवधान)

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">MR. CHAIRMAN : Kindly speak on the subject under discussion. You can talk about Dr. Ambedkar when you speak on the Constitution.

"> श्री हरीभाऊ शंकर महाले : जब वी.पी. सिंह की सरकार थी, तब उन्होंने बाबासाहेब का तैल चित्र बनवाने की कोशिश की, उन्होंने तैल चित्र बनवाये। बाबासाहेब का जो पुतला है, वह चार दिन तक लोक सभा सभाचारों में नहीं दिखायी दिया। दूरदर्शन के बाबू इतने कामचोर हैं। वी.पी. सिंह की सरकार थी, फिर भी उन्होंने चार दिन तक इसे नहीं दिखाया। मैंने लोक सभा में नियम ३७७ के तहत दिया कि बाबासाहेब का चित्र दूरदर्शन पर दिखायें। लेकिन बाबू लोग ऐसे हैं कि उन्होंने नहीं दिया। क्या दूरदर्शन आम लोगों के लिए नहीं है। दूरदर्शन सबका है, उसे सबका सहयोगी होना चाहिए। मैं किसी पर आरोप नहीं लगा रहा हूँ। लेकिन जो तालाब रखता है, वह पानी ज्यादा लेता है। लेकिन सभी के लिए उसका उपयोग होना चाहिए। इतना कहकर मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

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">SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): I submit that you kindly take the discussion to tomorrow rather than allowing only two minutes to each Member.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for this discussion does not permit more time to Members. This is the time allotted by the Business Advisory Committee.

">SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Members are making valid suggestions. Some time should be given to them to speak.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: The time is allotted by the Business Advisory Committee.

">SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : We do allocate time in the Business Advisory Committee that way but always more time is given to the Members to speak.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, let them consume more time.

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Sir, I would like to express my displeasure at the way the BJP Members are being treated. It is most unfortunate that a party with 182 Members has got only one Member to speak on its behalf.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: You have your Minister sitting here.

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Does it mean that we do not need to come to the House at all? ...(Interruptions)

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : They might be very magnanimous ...(Interruptions)...Does it apply for only the Ministers? If so, then there is no need of us coming to this House at all. We have not come here just to raise our hands.

">MR. CHAIRMAN : The time allotted for your party has already been exhausted by your Member.

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Sir, speaking in this House is in itself an incentive. We go to the Library and prepare the subject for hours together, and after that when we come here to speak, you say that there is no time for the Ruling party Members... (Interruptions)

">MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Pramod Mahajan has given it in writing that 'if only the time permits, you allow more Members to speak'.

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Sir, you are controlling the House here. The Chair is controlling this House. That is the point, I just want to make.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: In the morning at 10 o'clock, you have different views.

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Because we belong to the Ruling party, you cannot be so partial to us. Three Members from the Congress party have already spoken on this subject. You tell us. Just to speak in this House, we will have to become Ministers, then only, you will allow us to speak! I express my deepest displeasure.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: I could give you any time you want because I do not have any other work here on the Chair. But a decision had been taken in the BAC.

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : It would have been better just to have been elected as a Member of a single-Member party so that on every subject, I could have spoken. 182-Members party will get the same time as one-Member party or two-Member party gets! What is this, Sir?

">MR. CHAIRMAN: Please allow Shri Kanungo to speak.

">SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO (JAGATSINGHPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had thought that perhaps I would be the last speaker. But I am not the last speaker, and my words are also not the last words.

"> Sir, I have been keeping in high esteem, hon. Shri Jaipal Reddy, even when I was not here in this House. My respect for him has also not gone down. I have heard him here and outside also with rapt attention. I have also heard different voices. I thought to express myself to give my free voice, to give my opinion of conscience because I do not want to put on a different face.

"> Sir, the electronic media of today and that of five to ten years before are altogether different. They have gone a sea change. During 1974-75, when T.V. was not known all over the country, the radio was only the known, the All India Radio was known as 'All Indira Radio'. At that time, I was a Member of the Orissa Legislative Assembly from the Congress party. During that time, even people in rural places were telling that 'it is All Indira Radio', what happened after the 1977 Elections? Everybody knows. My point is very simple. There was monopoly of the electronic media, and therefore, everybody was telling that it should be given autonomy.

"> Sir, I put before this august House. I appeal to the conscience of the hon. Jaipal Reddy. Is he really interested in the credibility of Doordarshan and electronic media? Is he really interested to have perfect accountability of the electronic media, the Prasar Bharati Board or Doordarshan, whatever the case may be? If he wants it, then my humble submission is that, when free channels and private channels are available, why don't we leave it under the control of the Government totally? This way, the credibility part, the accountability part will get scrutinised because they would be under scrutiny every moment, not only by this House alone but also by hundred of crores of people of our country.

"> Therefore, my point is that in the changing scenario, when there are so many free channels, let it be compared accountability-wise, quality-wise and character-wise. Thereby, the character, credibility and accountability of the Government will be subject to scrutiny every moment not only here but also outside.

"> I want to express my opinion that it should be left in the hands of the Government so that the Government's character, quality, calibre, credibility and accountability would be subject to scrutiny at every moment not only by this House, but by the whole of India, instead of granting full autonomy to audio-visual media, i.e. A.I.R. and Doordarshan.

">MR. CHAIRMAN : Now Shri Kharabela Swain will speak.

"> ... (Interruptions)

">SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Are you giving me two minutes? In that case, I do not want to speak.

">MR. CHAIRMAN: Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat will now speak.

"> प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत (अजमेर) : सभापति महोदय, मैं आपकी आज्ञा का पालन करते हुए यही कहना चाहूंगा कि रेड्डी साहब का दर्द हम समझ सकते हैं। जिन भावनाओं के साथ ये उस समय प्रसार भारती लेकर आये और गुजराल सरकार के जाते-जाते जिस प्रकार की परिस्थितियों के अंदर लोगों को रखा, वे सारी चीजें सामने आ रही हैं तो उनका दर्द समझ में आ सकता है। लेकिन कसरीकरण का आरोप लगाना या भगवाकरण का आरोप लगाना सर्वथा निराधार है। एक उर्दू के शायर की पंक्तियां मुझे याद आती हैं

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"> ढहम आह भी भरते हैं तो हो जाते हैं बदनाम,

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"> वह कत्ल भी करते हैं, तो चर्चा नहीं होती।"

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"> इसलिए माननीय जेटली साहब को मुबारकबाद देना चाहूंगा कि वे

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"> ठलीक-लीक गाड़ी चले, लीक ही चले कपूत

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"> लीक छाड़ि तीनों चले, शायर सिंह सपूत।"

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"> इसलिए आप हमारी एन.डी.ए. की भावना के अनुसार, जिस स्वाभिमान के साथ, क्योंकि स्वायत्ता हम भी चाहते हैं लेकिन स्वायत्तता के नाम पर स्वच्छंदता नहीं होनी चाहिए। आटोनामी के साथ-साथ एकाउंटैबिलिटी भी होनी चाहिए। मैं समझता हूँ कि आप हमारे इन विचारों को अवश्य मद्देनजर रखेंगे।

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"> आकाशवाणी एवं दूरदर्श में मार्केटिंग एंड मैनेजमेंट सिस्टम को भी बदलने का मामला है। प्रोफेशनलिज्म को भी लाने का मामला है। अपप्रोडेशन ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी का मामला भी है। इसके साथ क्वालिटी ऑफ प्रोग्राम और विश्वसनीयता बनाने की भी बहुत आवश्यकता है। मैं समझता हूँ कि इन सारी बातों को ध्यान में रखते हुए जिन दो व्यक्तियों को हटाया गया और जिनके नाम पर तथाकथित वामपंथियों ने और कुछ धर्मनिरपेक्षतावादियों ने दिल्ली हाईकोर्ट में हो-हल्ला मचाया, वह याचिका निरस्त करके एक प्रकार से उनके मुँह पर करारी चपत मारी है कि वास्तव में वे गलती पर थे और उन आदमियों को हटाना सही था। यदि वामपंथी रखे जायें तो सब ठीक है और कोई और विचारक रखे जायें तो भगवाकरण हो रहा है, केसरीकरण हो रहा है, मैं समझता हूँ कि इस प्रकार की प्रवृत्ति से हमको बचना चाहिए। मैं जेटली साहब और एन.डी.ए. की सरकार से प्रार्थना करूँगा कि राष्ट्र हित को सर्वोपरि समझकर आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन को स्वायत्तशासी बनाते हुए उसकी एकाउंटैबिलिटी का भी ध्यान रखा जायें, क्वालिटी का भी ध्यान रखा जायें। इसी के साथ अनेक चैनलों की तुलना के आधार पर हमें व्यावसायिक दृष्टि से आगे बढ़ना है, उस बात को भी मद्देनजर रखते हुए आप अपने बनाये हुए कदमों पर निरंतर चलते रहें।

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"> कदम-कदम बढ़ाये जा,

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"> खुरी के गीत गायें जा।

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">MR. CHAIRMAN : Now the hon. Minister will reply.

">SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : The hon. Minister can reply tomorrow because the House is not full.

">MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister has to finish it today. That is the decision taken.

">SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I will go by the decision of the Chair.

"> 19.00 hrs

">THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this discussion under rule 193 is with regard to the functioning of Prasar Bharati.

"> Certainly, with regard to the functioning of the Prasar Bharati and the conceptualization of its future that we have, this House and its hon. Members would have a lot to say because Prasar Bharati, Doordarshan and All India Radio are still struggling to define their identity in an environment where there are a large number of private channels. Some Members did refer and I must compliment Shri Suresh Kurup for having referred to the concept in which Prasar Bharati could be developed. But I deeply regret to say that a discussion on Prasar Bharati need not have been confined primarily to two individuals or to the attitudes of individuals who head the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

"> I must confess that I have the deepest personal regard for Shri Jaipal Reddy, who initiated the discussion. He was also fair enough to say that during the last few weeks that I have been associated with the Department he had no instance to cite any intervention by me. However, he made two crucial points. One was with regard to the retirement of two members and the other was that he thought that I, holding the current charge of this Ministry, am a bit too slippery.

"> I, today, realized why he has been awarded the honour of the 'Outstanding Parliamentarian'. He anticipated what could have been said about the manner in which things have taken place in the past. I may remind him through you, Sir, that both of us were together in opposing the Emergency, both of us used to speak in the same voice on the Bofors case. I remain where I am and he slipped into the Congress; and today it was not merely slippery but I could see the point of distinction between what Shri K.P. Singhdeo said, what Dr. Girija Vyas said and what, belonging to the same Party, Shri Jaipal Reddy had to say. They were making suggestions with regard to the functioning of the Prasar Bharati but Shri Jaipal Reddy still wanted to defend what happened in November, 1997.

"> I do not want to go into specific dates as to what happened when. The mindset was Janata Dal; the defence was of the then members clearly identified with political ideologies coming into the Board; and then, the argument being made now, 'My Government was on its last leg.' I do not want to quibble on the dates. The Jain Commission Report had been submitted to the Government. As a Minister of the Cabinet, the Government was aware of what the Jain Commission had said. The Congress Party was making the United Front Government shaky. There was a race whether the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting appoints the Board first or whether Shri Sitaram Kesari succeeds in withdrawing the support first. ... (Interruptions) The Ministry facilitates the appointment of the Board.

"> My friend, Shri Rudy gave some dates. I do not want to get into those dates once again. But every statement with regard to withdrawal of support from the then Government by Shri Kesari, his first warning and his second ultimatum were timed with the appointment of the Board and what Board did they appoint?

"> I must confess that I have personally nothing against the members including the members who have retired. They may be very eminent in their own fields. But when you speak of plurality, did you consider that there was any other political opinion in this country other than the political opinion with which those persons were identified? The Chairman was a person, ostensibly a very honourable

man, who had very strong left leanings. The CEO was very critical of the BJP; he was more critical of the Congress. He was close to the so-called 'Third Front'.

">The two members who have retired may be people of excellence in their own fields, but who can deny that they have leanings to a political ideology. I have always asked myself this question: If you speak of political plurality, it must be reflected in the programmes, in the current affairs programmes. Did it not ever strike you that people who could have inclinations to some other ideology should also come on the Board? Please do not have double standards on the issue of autonomy; there is no principle in Indian politics, that only the people with Left ideology will represent autonomy and everything else is destructive of autonomy. That is the principle of double standards which you have been moving with.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : Will you yield for a minute please?

First of all, the appointments cannot be made by the I&B Ministry and were not made by the I&B Ministry. Selections are made by the Selection Committee. For example, the Chairman of the Press Council is appointed by an independent Selection Committee. Why are you giving credit to me which I do not deserve?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I am glad that Mr. Jaipal Reddy is saying this. Therefore, it was obligatory on the then Ministry - on the midnight of 20th November when he realised that the Chief Executive Officer-designate had passed the commercial interests with Doordarshan - to have disqualified him from being appointed because he could have been disqualified from continuing and also to have informed the Selection Committee once again that they have erroneously appointed a man who is disqualified from being appointed in the first instance. But he had already anticipated that appointment and amended the law by an Ordinance and the amendment which he brought about was this.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : When did I amend the law?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Well, you must have had the person in mind, when you amended the law. ... (Interruptions) I will give clarifications when you seek them later.

I know that some facts are very uncomfortable because there is no presumption.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : Some facts can be twisted by clever lawyers!

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Well, you have said about slippery today, but today it was not an act of being slippery, today it was an acrobatic act by which, sitting in the Congress benches, he is defending what the Congress had outrightly condemned. Let me just read out to him what the Congress had to say about what he did in November 1997. A Member of this House belonging to the Congress Party, Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar had to say this in November 1997 about what the then United Front Government did and about what he did. He refers to this and I will read out only one sentence because some of the other sentences perhaps are little more aggressive. He says:

"The selection represents cronyism at its worst."

This is what a Member of his present party had to say about what he did in November 1997. He wanted to give autonomy to the Board. I am, per se not against the concept of autonomy. But please do not re-position me in order to defend something that he did, which is indefensible. He wanted to give autonomy to a person who was politically so committed as the Chief Executive Officer. Is it desirable? He said that I am going to saffronise. Well, I have not made any single appointment. The appointments even today will be made by the same Committee. Why is he anticipating that the same Committee will make the appointments to the persons of saffron colour? Going by his own yardstick, if 'red' can be autonomy, why is 'saffron' a threat to autonomy?

Please do not have double standards. What you did in November 1997 had done a great harm to the concept of autonomy and the Prasar Bharati. The entire asset worth Rs.55,000 crore was placed in the hands of an individual, and how was that individual appointed? Mr. Reddy makes a strong grievance of the fact that Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, as the I&B Minister brought forward an Ordinance to get rid of Mr. Gill. But Mr. Reddy brought an ordinance to appoint Gill. Has that Ordinance ever become an Act?

The Ordinance was passed to repeal certain provisions of the Act. The Prasar Bharati Act had been passed by both the Houses of Parliament and an Ordinance was passed when the Congress was on the verge of withdrawing support and the Government was shaky. The Government knew that there was no possibility of this Ordinance ever becoming an Act.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : The Ordinance was passed on the 29th October.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Yes. The Jain Commission report had been submitted before that date.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : No. You are wrong. Mr. Jaitley, I will table a privilege motion. The Jain Commission report was not even leaked, let alone being submitted.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Well, I am sorry, you are referring to the 'leak', but I am referring to the 'availability' of the report with the Government.

SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY : No. It was not available.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: As a member of the Government, you certainly were privy to the knowledge which is much more than a leak. What kind of a person was appointed? The Selection Committee was not told that a person with commercial interest in Doordarshan is being appointed as CEO.

SHRI JAIPAL REDDY : He did not have any commercial interest. I did not want to defend an individual.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Forget that he was critical of BJP. He was a person who was a strong campaigner of a particular political view. The entire Rs. 55,000 crore asset, an independent electronic media as you want to define it, was handed over to this person. May I just read his views? He writes about your present party. He was writing about a person who was no more. Some courtesy could have been shown to him. He writes, "Rajiv lacked her adroitness and clout; whereas during Indira's time, dissidents were controlled through a well directed activity, Rajiv ended it giving out of control." ... (Interruptions) Please allow me to complete. Perhaps in your present seat, it may embarrass you. "But Indiraji was never rude, not even to her worst opponents and refused to indulge in personal invectives, Rajiv had no such qualms. One can take an indulgent view of Rajiv trying to amuse him by his juvenile witticism, but for the fact that every word that Prime Minister utters carries weight or should carry weight, in such a high office it is better to be dull but discreet than smart and flippant". ... (Interruptions) Please allow me to complete.

SHRI JAIPAL REDDY : Since you have referred to the criticism that he voiced, I would like to make one remark. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Why was a political person appointed as CEO? This is an explanation that you owe to the country.

SHRI JAIPAL REDDY : He voiced this criticism in a book as an author of that book. These were brought to the notice of the Congress Party and the Congress Party defended Shri S.S. Gill in the Twelfth Lok Sabha in spite of this. You kindly note this down.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Well, a senior Member of the Congress Party had said that it represents political cronyism at its worst.

SHRI JAIPAL REDDY : In the Twelfth Lok Sabha, when I was not the member of the Congress Party, the Congress Party defended the appointment of Shri S.S. Gill and opposed your Ordinance.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I am glad that you have pointed out this to me. Then you use the adjective "slippery" for them and not for me.

He further says, "Rajiv had scant regard for established Parliamentary conventions". You have appointed a person who is out and out political. You have appointed him as CEO who will run the electronic media of this country for the next six years. Therefore, I wish to merely submit that the problem with the Prasar Bharati is far more than a problem relating to one individual being appointed or two individuals being removed. A question was raised as to why two members were removed. That is the mandate of the law. Section 6(v) of the Prasar Bharati Act is very clear. It says that each member will have a term of six years, but it would be a rotational membership like in Rajya Sabha where one-third of members will retire every two years. The Government will have the power to retire two members after every two years and two members after four years and the rest may continue for the full term. It is not the discretion of the Government. Therefore, from the next round onwards, the rotational system will come into play. The Government had no discretion in the matter but to retire two members. How do the Government exercise this discretion? There is a serious difference of opinion. One view was that you can do it by draw of lots. That is a view which Shri Jaipal Reddy publicly supported. With a minor legal background, I feel, that it is untenable in law because when you put people in governance of Prasar Bharati, those with a larger ability to contribute can continue more, then there has to be a criteria for the continuation. The basis for that continuation cannot be that one who is lucky will get a longer term.

It is not that he will continue though there are others who may be better qualified than him. Courts have always frowned upon draw of lots, chance or luck as an instrumentality of administrative decision making. We, therefore, went to the Attorney General and said that this was the circular. Should it be by draw of lots? The Attorney General was kind enough to record his opinion that this is the procedure which has been frowned by the courts all over the world. There has to be some criteria and this particular criteria should be followed. We have not, after following that criteria, appointed anybody. It is the same honourable selection panel which will appoint the people. There is no question of people of one ideology or the other being appointed. It is the same system which will be followed. The legality of our action has also been tested in courts. The consequences are known and, therefore, to say that it is ultra virus, unconstitutional or we have done it for political reasons, is not meant to be a stigma in any way about those who have retired. We have applied the criteria and unfortunately the two had to go and, therefore, two went. Therefore, whatever criteria we would have applied, instead of Shri Yadav, Shri Vergheese would have retired first. Shri Jaipal Reddy would have then said that Shri Vergheese is a man behind the idea of Prasar Bharati. He is associated with this idea since 1977. He should have been given the longest term. Why has the Government retired him first? Any argument could have been raised in relation to these retirements.

But, as I said earlier, Sir, today the issue is what is the functioning of Prasar Bharati going to be. Shri Pal was kind enough to say that I speak in two voices. Different people speak in different voices. It is very easy to make these allegations. But it is difficult when the same allegations are made back. Could I then say, that people in his Party also speak in the same voices? Is there no institution in West Bengal where the appointments have been made where people of a political colour go in? Sir, they want autonomy for electronic media in Delhi.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): That means the Minister is agreeing that he speaks in two voices.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Well, that is your presumption, that is a hope and I would not oblige you with that.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : You are taking the other example to corroborate your position.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Well, I will explain the position, Sir. The West Bengal Government want to run a State-I Channel. So, in West Bengal there must be a State-run Channel and in Delhi there must be autonomy for electronic media. I do not know, Sir, who speaks in two voices.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, the problem is that the Central Government is confusing it with the State Government.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: If there is to be an autonomy then autonomy will not recognise the State boundaries within this country. It is an argument which has to prevail all through.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : The State Government wanted a Bengali Channel and not a State Channel.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, Shri Pal has been kind enough to state that. The Prasar Bharati I am given to understand, and this was a suggestion which was made by some of the hon. Members, is today effectively contemplating and putting into action channels in at least five regional languages in the next few months which will be available in five different States. There will be Satellite Channels running 24 hours. I am given to understand that one of their contemplations is also for a Bengali Channel. That perhaps may then satisfy the need of the State Government also.

The real issue before Prasar Bharati, Sir, is, with the air becoming public, available to private parties, it has been mentioned that there has been competition. Obviously, when there is a freedom of choice, the viewers will switch over from one channel to another. The figures today are, there are 69 million TV homes in this country. Of 69 million TV homes in this country, 29.4 million homes have a freedom of choice because they also have a cable and satellite channel. In States where the powerful private regional channels have come up and are very popular, the dip in both the revenue and the viewership of Prasar Bharati is more significant. What, therefore, has to be done to rejuvenate this organisation? What is the role of this organisation going to be?

I agree with the hon. Member from CPI(M) who spoke towards the end and asked and several other hon. Members also said - can you take BBC as a model? In the first instances, it can be very difficult to do. But the Act itself says that this is an Act which is contemplating to give Prasar Bharati - Doordarshan and All India Radio - a status of a public service broadcaster. Now if it is to develop as a public service broadcaster - the hon. Member was right when he said that it has terrestrial monopoly and large reach - people will have to be entertained. But besides entertainment, it is also information and education which have to be given. The private channels may only go for entertainment because it really brings revenue and that makes it sustainable. But even today, there is already a gradual shift taking place as far as projecting Doordarshan as a public service broadcaster is concerned.

It is very easy to say that it only projects the Government in power. I have seen the News and Current Affairs Channel. There are a series of discussions which take place. There is hardly a discussion which takes place having a representative from one party. Plurality of opinion must be encouraged and it is always there. Today if I give the figures of the one month itself, on education and cultural activities, the Prime Channel -- DD-1 is to be developed as a public service broadcaster -- has 22 per cent of its programmes on education, and culture and on information, it has 36 per cent programmes. Therefore, even today 58 per cent of DD-1 is moving in the direction of public service broadcaster. Dr. D'Souza was very right when she said that she is given to understand that they are already contemplating whether messages with a social purpose in regard to people who cannot read and write can be available on such a channel. The entertainment content on this channel has already come down to 42 per cent. But some entertainment will have to be there because entertainment cannot be the prerogative of those who have cable and satellite channels available to them. It is because still there are 60 per cent of the television homes in this country which do not have a cable connection. Therefore, some entertainment have to be provided as far as they are concerned. Therefore, my respectful submission would be, with regard to the functioning of Prasar Bharati as of today, there is an enactment. The enactment is the law. By Ordinances, efforts have been made to repeal some parts of the Act. But those Ordinances never had the approval of this House. People have pointed out several shortcomings in the Act. But then, it is for this House, as and when the opportunity arises, to bring changes as far as the Act is concerned.

Today, our priorities with regard to Prasar Bharati are very clear. We are concerned in developing it as a public service broadcaster. We want the quality of its programming to improve. We want it to be a forum which has credibility because there are a large number of entertainment programmes and some revenue generation will have to come. The rest is coming as Budgetary support from the Government. Its revenue generation has to improve. It is easy to construe professionalism as meaning RSS and professionalism as meaning saffron. I do not know how such a political construction is even imaginable. But today a reference was made to the election telecast. On an election programme each day in the News Bulletin, if party 'A' was shown, leader of party 'B' was also shown. In the current affairs programme, there was a plurality of opinion. But the difficulty was that the post-election telecast, Prasar Bharati telecast had the largest viewership in the country. It is several times over and above private channels. But the revenue generation was only a small percentage of what the private channels did. Therefore, if you are running an electronic media channel, you have current affairs programmes, and you have entertainment programmes. There is not a single system in the country in the Prasar Bharati even radio or television which has the ability to market programmes so as to be able to generate revenue. As a result of which it is the taxpayers money which is used to give budgetary support to Prasar Bharati.

Therefore, in the face of competition should various professional departments in Prasar Bharati be set up in relation to what is the quality of entertainment and how the current affairs programmes are to be packaged and marketed? Most of all, the Government is committed that in order to develop credibility, the programmes of Prasar Bharati, particularly the news and current affairs programmes must be on a non-partisan basis. It cannot be used to propagate only one view because that would go contrary to the spirit of a liberal democracy or that would go contrary to even political pluralism which is a part of our system. Therefore, in order to consider how the structures of Prasar Bharati can be professionalised, it need not--my friend was right--operate only as a commercial organisation.

In public service broadcasting, commerce would take a back seat. But in entertainment and some other RSS programmes, commercial realisation will have to be there; otherwise it is the taxpayer who is burdened. Public service broadcasting has to be done not with the idea of yielding monetary returns, but with the idea of educating and informing, as he has rightly mentioned. How is the structure of the organisation to be professionalised? Is the entire resource being fully utilised or not? We have, therefore, appointed three of the best available professionals to go into these questions.

A question was raised as to how long it will take. We have, in the first instance, given them a period of about three months to complete their study. I am given to understand that they are already working on the terms of reference which have been assigned to them. It is our endeavour to make sure that Prasar Bharati exists not merely as a competitor or as a clone of private channel, but as a public service broadcaster with a distinct identity of its own.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : I want to ask a small clarification. The Minister has admitted that two members from the Board were removed.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : We are not satisfied with the answer given by the Minister in regard to retirement of members and in regard to non-filling of vacancies. We, therefore, stage a walk out.

1927 hours

(At this stage, Shri S. Jaipal Reddy and some other

hon. Members left the House.)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : The Minister has admitted that they were removed because ideologically they were opposed to them. The Minister has not replied to our valid queries about the removal.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House stands adjourned to meet on Wednesday, 22nd December, 1999 at 11 a.m.

19.28 hours

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on

Wednesday, December 22, 1999/Pausa 1, 1921 (Saka).
