

Title: Reported strike by the Administrative staff of Akashvani and Doordarshan in Prasar Bharti.

SHRI SUDHANGSHU SEAL (CALCUTTA-NORTH WEST): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting to the growing disparity in pay and gross discrimination among the employees working in Prasar Bharati.

The growing discontent among the employees of Prasar Bharati and the state of affairs in Prasar Bharati requires immediate attention of the House. It is due to the most arbitrary style of functioning of Prasar Bharati where the employees have been discriminated and treated unequally. This is reflected *vide* Order No.310/173/97-(D) dated 25.2.1999 wherein a section of employees pertaining to the Engineering and Programme Cadres were granted higher pay scales over and above the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission as they were agitated over this issue. The Prasar Bharati chose to settle and conveniently implement this pay hike just for the above two categories of employees by taking an undertaking from the concerned beneficiaries that they would be liable for refund and recovery of all the financial benefits in the event they choose not to work for Prasar Bharati. It is ironical but the fact still remains that, no such offer has been made to the Administrative Staff who also have been working for the Corporation ever since its transformation to Broadcasting Corporation of India (Prasar Bharati).

Sir, it may be worthwhile to submit here that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communication under the chairmanship of your goodself also recommended in its 49th Report that all the employees working in Prasar Bharati are to be given monetary benefit without exception. It is understood that about 150 Members of Parliament have recommended this matter to the hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting for immediate redressal. The hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting had assured the delegation of this association led by Shri K.B. Krishnamurthy, hon. Member of Rajya Sabha and Shri Sharad Joshi, hon. Member of Rajya Sabha on two different occasions in the recent past that this matter would be looked into and addressed immediately. In spite of all this, the disparity and unequal treatment still continues. This has caused enormous resentment amongst the employees which has led them to the path of agitation. They are now observing a total pen down strike in all AIR and TV centres throughout the country. They are boycotting the salary and also not undertaking the work of salary disbursement. They are also observing a token hunger strike on 28th and 29th April, 2005 at Akashvani Bhavan, New Delhi.

Sir, yesterday our Leader, Shri Basu Deb Acharia, myself along with two other Members of Parliament, namely, Shri Lakshman Seth and Dr. Ramchandra Dome visited the spot. We saw that they are observing the hunger strike. We feel that they should be treated properly.

So, I urge upon the Government to look into the matter and do the needful at the earliest.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, the Central Administrative Tribunal was set up 20 years back.

MR. SPEAKER: Your notice is not on that. It is on abolition of Prasar Bharati.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, it is on CAT.

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? Please let me see. In the meantime, let me call Shri Raghunath Jha. I will look into it.