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Title: Statutory resolution regarding disapproval of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Ordinance, 2008 (n0. 5 of 2008) and Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Bill, 2008.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Items No. 23 and 24 together. Shri Mohan Singh.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (DEORIA): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House disapproves of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Ordinance, 2008 (No.5 of 2008) promulgated by the President on 7 February, 2008."

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990 came into force on 15 September 1997. For the purpose of general superintendence, direction and management of the Corporation, sub-section (4) of 3 of the said Act has provided for constitution of a Prasar Bharati Board which exercises all such powers and do all such acts and thing as may be exercised or done by the Corporation under the Act. Sub-section (5) of section 3 of the Act provided that among other members of the Board, it shall also have a Chairman who is also a part time member of the Board.

16.48 hrs.

(Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey *in the Chair*)

The Chairman holds office for a term of six years from the date on which he enters upon this office. The Act does not provide for upper age limit for the Chairman as is stipulated for the Whole-time Members of the Board. A Whole-Time Member of Prasar Bharati Board holds office for a term of six years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of sixty-two years, whichever is earlier. There is already an upper-age limit cap for the Whole-time Members namely, Chief Executive Officer, and Executive Member, Member (Personnel) and Member (Finance). Therefore, it is felt that in the case of Chairman also an upper age limit of seventy years may be fixed to ensure appointment of comparatively younger talent and experience. It is also felt that reducing the tenure of Chairman from the present six to three years shall help to bring diversity of experience at the top level for the benefit of the organization. Similarly need is also being felt for change in the tenure and upper age limit of the Chief Executive Officer from six to five years and from sixty two years to sixty five years respectively.

The Prasar Bharati has to compete with the private electronic media houses as well as to achieve the social objectives entrusted upon it by the Act of Parliament in letter and spirit. It is being felt necessary to rationalize such matters in order to inject sectoral experience to rejuvenate Prasar Bharati and its Board by undertaking of immediate legislation.

Since the Parliament was not in Session and in view of the urgency explained above, it became necessary to give effect to the above proposal through an Ordinance. Therefore, President under article 123(1) of Constitution of India promulgated the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Ordinance, 2008 on 7 February, 2008.

In this context, we also introduced a legislation in this House to replace the Ordinance into a legislation. Therefore, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990, be taken into consideration."

श्री मोहन सिंह (देवरिया) : सभापति महोदय, भारत की संवैधानिक व्यवस्था के अनुसार किसी आकस्मिक तत्काल, आपातकालीन स्थिति में जब संसद का अधिवेशन न हो तो भारत के महामहिम राष्ट्रपति जी को यह अधिकार दिया गया है कि सरकारी कामकाज प्रभावित न हो इसलिए विशेष स्थिति में उनको कानून बनाने का अधिकार अध्यादेश के जरिए दिया जाए। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह संवैधानिक व्यवस्था का नग्न आकृमण है। मैं ऐसा नहीं समझता हूँ कि प्रसार भारती के चीफ एग्जीक्यूटिव ऑफिसर और उसके कुछ सदस्यों की उम्र में कटौती या बढ़ोतरी करने के लिए या उनकी उम्र की सीमा बढ़ाने के लिए ऐसी कोई आपातकालीन स्थिति देश के सामने आ गई कि हम उसे अध्यादेश के जरिए लाएं। हम नहीं चाहते कि अध्यादेश करने का राष्ट्रपति का जो अधिकार है, उसका मंतिमंडल दुरुपयोग करें। इस तरह की स्थिति आने पर कैबिनेट में निहित या भारत के राष्ट्रपति में निहित अधिकारों पर उंगली उठती है और चर्चा होती है कि हम इस तरह के अधिकारों का दुरुपयोग करके एक आलोचना का पात्र बनते हैं। इसे सामान्य विधेयक की हैसियत से माननीय मंत्री जी पहले भी और आज जैसे विधेयक की शक्ल में लाए हैं, सदन के सामने इंट्रोड्यूस करते और संसद की स्थायी समिति में सम्यक विचारोपरान्त केवल कुछ सदस्यों और चीफ एग्जीक्यूटिव ऑफिसर के उम्र के घटाव, बढ़ाव के अलावा प्रसार भारती के पूरे सैट-अप में विचार करवा सकते थे। आज उसमें

परिवर्तन की अनन्त संभावनाएं हैं और लोगों को अनन्त अपेक्षाएं भी हैं। संसद की स्टैंडिंग कमेटी में छानबीन करने और सम्यक विचार करने से बचने के लिए सरकार ने संविधान की इस धारा का दुरुपयोग किया है। इसलिए हमारी मजबूरी है। माननीय मंत्री जी से भी मेरे दोस्ताना संबंध हैं और मैं भी सरकार के पूरे विरोध में नहीं हूँ, इसलिए बहुत कष्ट के साथ इस विधेयक का विरोध करता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motions moved:

"That this House disapproves of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Ordinance, 2008 (No. 5 of 2008) promulgated by the President on 7 February, 2008."

"That the Bill further to amend the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990, be taken into consideration."

श्रीमती किरण माहेश्वरी (उदयपुर): सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी द्वारा प्रसार भारती बोर्ड के संबंध में जो अध्यादेश लाया गया है, वास्तव में लगता है कि जल्दबाजी करके लाया गया है। कहा गया है कि कॉम्पैटिशन का युग है जिससे बहुत से प्रोड्यूसर वैनल्स के साथ कॉम्पैटिशन करना पड़ रहा है। इसलिए एग्जीक्यूटिव ऑफिसर की उम्र जो 62 वर्ष है, उसे बढ़ा कर 70 साल करना चाहते हैं। 70 साल की उम्र करके आप किस तरीके का कॉम्पैटिशन प्रोड्यूसर मीडिया से करेंगे। आज प्रोड्यूसर वैनल्स में बहुत यंग लोगों को ज्यादा से ज्यादा प्रमोट किया जाता है लेकिन यहां उम्र बढ़ाना, ऐसा लगता है कि जल्दबाजी में इस तरीके का निर्णय लिया गया है।

श्री मोहन सिंह : सभापति जी, टेलीविजन में जवानों के चेहरे खूबसूरत लगते हैं।

श्रीमती किरण माहेश्वरी : एक तरफ कहना कि उम्र बढ़ा कर 62 से 70 साल कैप लिमिट करना और फिर कहना कि कॉम्पैटिशन का युग है, इसलिए इनकी उम्र बढ़ा रहे हैं, दूसरा यह कहना कि टैन्डर को 6 साल से घटा कर तीन साल कर रहे हैं, इसलिए कि वेंज होते रहना चाहिए, मेरी सोच है कि तीन साल बहुत कम समय है। जब किसी चीज को अच्छा या डेवलप करना चाहते हैं या नई योजना लाना चाहते हैं तो उसके अन्दर 6 साल उम्र डिफाइन थी, वह बिल्कुल उपयुक्त थी। [\[a56\]](#)

इतनी ही उम्र हो तो आदमी अच्छे तरीके से काम कर सकता है। लेकिन जिस तरीके से अध्यादेश को लाया गया है, इस संबंध में मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहती हूँ कि वेयरमैन का सैलेशन कमेटी के माध्यम से होता है या टोटली पॉलिटेक्ली होता है? संसद की स्टैंडिंग कमेटी में ऐसे बहुत से विषय आते हैं जो प्रसार भारती से संबंधित होते हैं लेकिन उन विषयों को इस अध्यादेश के माध्यम से या किसी और तरीके से लाकर इसमें जोड़ा जाता है कि हम किस तरीके से प्रसार भारती को और अधिक पॉपुलर कर सकते हैं। हम आजकल देखते हैं कि जितने भी वैनल्स हैं उसके मुकाबले प्रसार भारती का वैनल बहुत कम लोग देखते हैं क्योंकि इसमें केवल सरकार के डेवलपमेंट वर्क का ही वितरण किया जाता है, देश की पूरी छवि नहीं आती है। यह बार-बार कहा जाता है कि हम कॉम्पैटिशन युग में जीना चाहते हैं, इसे और पॉपुलर करना चाहते हैं और दूसरी तरफ पहलू साफ है कि न्यूज चैनल में नेताओं या मिनिस्टर्स के प्रोग्राम को ही हाईलाइट किया जाता है जबकि देश की बहुत सी प्रॉब्लम्स के बारे में इसमें नहीं आता है। यहां प्रसार भारती का अध्यादेश लाया गया है, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान इस ओर भी आकर्षित करना चाहूंगी कि वैनल्स में महिलाओं की छवि को लेकर बहुत गलत वितरण किए जाते हैं। खास तौर से इस पर किस तरीके से रोक लगनी चाहिए, इस बारे में अध्यादेश में बातें लेकर आते कि वैनल्स पर रोक लगाने के लिए वया कदम उठा रहे हैं या सेंसर के रूप में कार्य करेंगे या नहीं? क्योंकि वैनल्स ही ऐसा माध्यम है जो घर-घर तक पहुंच गया है। कोई अपने परिवार के साथ पिवचर देखने जाए या न जाए, उस पर अंकुश लग सकता है लेकिन टीवी वैनल्स के माध्यम से हर घर में बात जाती है। अब हर घर में टीवी आ गया है, इसके माध्यम से जो भी गलत चीज आती है वह परिवार और हमारी संस्कृति के ऊपर गलत असर डालती है। ऐसी स्थिति में गलत चीजों पर रोक लगाने के लिए कोई कदम उठाते तो समझ में आता। इस तरह से कुल मिलाकर यह अध्यादेश बहुत जल्दबाजी में लाया गया है। हम स्टैंडिंग कमेटी के सजेशन पढ़ते हैं तो लगता है कि इन पर सही रूप से चर्चा होनी चाहिए लेकिन उन पर चर्चा न करके केवल किसी एग्जीक्यूटिव अफसर की उम्र बढ़ाने या किसी व्यक्ति विशेष को एजस्ट करने की बात है, हो सकता है यह मेरा आरोप हो। आप मुझे क्षमा करें अगर आपको यह आरोप लगता है लेकिन उम्र बढ़ाना और बोर्ड की छः साल से लिमिट कम करके तीन साल करना समझ में नहीं आ रहा है इसलिए मैं इसका विरोध करती हूँ।

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (SABARKANTHA): Sir, I rise to support the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Bill, 2008.

The Bill seeks to fix the upper age limit for the Chairman as well as to increase the upper age limit for CEO. It also reduces the tenures of CEO and individual members.

Prasar Bharati has a number of obligations. It has to compete with a number of channels which are thoroughly private and which have a large market. Besides this, it has a lot of social obligations. In fact, it is expected that it should have unbiased, balanced views and it should also respect the people's views as well as inform the people's views to the country. The people of the country must get a correct picture and also balanced views. That is what the main aim or the objective of the Prasar Bharati is.

In fact, I was reading the Report of the Standing Committee on Prasar Bharati. The kind of structure that it has is mind-boggling. For the information of the hon. Members, I would like to read a few lines from the Report of the Standing Committee. It says: "It is bewildering to note that with 225 radio stations and 361 transmitters owned by AIR, covering 91.42 per cent of the country, Prasar Bharati has AIR stations as well as Doordarshan." [\[h57\]](#)

17.00 hrs. [r58]

It says:

"It is bewildering to note that with 225 radio stations and 361 transmitters owned by AIR, covering 91.42 per cent of the country, Prasar Bharati has AIR stations as well as Doordarshan."

of the country by area and 99.13 per cent by population, and despite broadcasting programmes, in as many as 24 languages and 143 dialects, the listener ship of AIR as per the market report in 2004-05 stood at 53 per cent in case of urban areas, 58 per cent in case of rural areas and paltry 30 per cent in the metro cities. Likewise, Doordarshan operates 26 channels with 64 Doordarshan Kendras and 1,400 transmitters covering 90 per cent of India by population, but the market share of DD-I is 47.4 per cent, DD News is 12.9 per cent; and DD Sports is 2.3 per cent as per IRS Survey. The market share of advertisement revenue of Doordarshan is only 20 per cent with the remaining 80 per cent being shared by private channels..."

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Mistry, please mention the Report Number and the Year also.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (SABARKANTHA): Sir, it is the Report of June, 2007, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The title is "Role of Prasar Bharati and its future status".

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR (AURANGABAD, BIHAR): It is the 47th Report.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : Yes, it is the 47th Report. It looks like that you are the Chairman of that Standing Committee...(Interruptions)

Sir, the objection is being raised on enhancing the age limit. Now, this is the time when the entire country thinks of a young people. It is very difficult to keep the age along with the new ideas, positive and dynamic ideas. That is why sometimes, people say that the more you have an age, the more it goes with, more people live in the past rather than in present and future. They always say: "â€¦." But they do not see, how we look at the future and the present as well. Of course, those who are decision-makers in Prasar Bharati, I am pretty sure in AIR, quite dynamic. At one time, I used to do a listener survey for AIR, Ahmedabad and I know how the people react to the number of the programmes. Despite that, the kind of heritage that AIR has and Doordarshan have in this country is mind boggling. Now, you hear all those original voices and original programmes, and it just charges you, it sometimes puts you back, and entertains you so well that you like to keep that on. But none the less, this is a medium, which shapes the ideas; this is a medium, which provides you entertainment; this is a medium, which injects into your mind, some kind of views, which put the people into a kind of making debates among them and this is a medium, which creates a different mood altogether. But it is such a lively thing. As a result, you need a good and dynamic Board; you need a good and dynamic CEO as well as the Chairman. A lot more depends on the Chairman of the Board.

Sir, there are instances in the foreign channels, specially the British Broadcasting Corporations and others, where due to want of one programme, there were some serious lapses on the part of the reporter in the programme and as a result of that, their Chairman had to resign. There have always been the biases. Some people say that the Board could be bias; some people say that the news could be bias. But AIR and Doordarshan could be such mediums. Whichever Government comes into power, there may be people complaining about showing some particular faces over Doordarshan all the time. I remember very well when Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad was the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, people from some of the regions were saying: "Instead of Doordarshan, it is Ravidarshan." That was a kind of comment, which was made. It is bound to happen. It is very difficult to keep that balancing by any public broadcasting system, specially where you have a Parliamentary Committee, who decides most of the things and makes recommendations.

The unfortunate part of Prasar Bharati is that you will have to pay for the entire staff of the Prasar Bharati from the Government side.[\[r59\]](#)

Almost 70 per cent of the finance goes from the Government. Naturally, the Government must have a say in that, in shaping those ideas. As a result, this has brought a change. I hope that this change under this Bill is brought to inject a new idea, new system, new work culture and so on to make Doordarshan and AIR much more relevant to the people's need of the present. As a result, I hope we all pass this Bill and I support fully these changes.

I was just looking at the commercial market that the private channel has as well as Doordarshan and especially, the news channel. Once I just tuned it and I found it so much informative partly because it has a less block, it has a less time for advertisement. In other channels, there is a lot more advertisement which is being covered.

Besides this, there are two or three points. Since I got this opportunity and especially when the Minister for Information and Broadcasting is here, I just cannot resist telling him that there is an AIR station in my constituency since four years. I request you to start that and inaugurate it. I have also given a notice under rule 377 on that.

The other thing is that in Gujarat very recently an Urdu Channel of AIR Rajkot is being closed down, and I am being flooded with letters from Rajkot. I do not know why. But I am flooded with letters from those who are listening to this Urdu Channel. I request you to start this Urdu Channel as well.

I have also seen that there are some biases as Madam Kiran was saying. Yes, there are biases among those who pick up

the news. I did find it. I have my own reason of finding it out. They may have their own reasons to find out. But nonetheless it depends on the person who chooses. This is not the reader who chooses. It is the editorial board which chooses which needs to be given prominence coverage. I do not know how you would change the attitude inside that. But nonetheless it needs a quite overhauling in the mechanism as well as in providing good, unbiased and balanced news in other Channels.

With this, I support this Bill and I hope that we will have still more good programmes on AIR and also on Doordarshan.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, as my predecessor spoke, it is a very innocuous and not a major amendment, though it is expected by everybody.

Sir, you know that Prasar Bharati existed almost for the last 10 years. This Board is never a full-fledged Board. It is always a truncated Board. Half of the Members or two-third Members are working. So, for such an important work if the Board is not fully appointed, it cannot give the desired result. Members from different fields come. If half of the fields are left, then a truncated Board cannot give the desired result. We have seen it in the past and I do not know whether we will have to continue to see it in the future also. So, that is one area of concern.

Now, the question of changing the ages and all that comes. One thing I do not understand. Just one week before the Parliament Session, the Minister said it is very urgent. I am not convinced with this argument. The age of the CEO is to be increased. I do not know whether it is necessary in the interest of the Prasar Bharati or in the interest of a particular person whom we want to keep or continue as CEA. I do not know why. Otherwise, there is no convincing reason why we have to bring this Ordinance 10 days before the Session. We have to keep that person only for three years. I do not know the reason. These questions are in the minds of the people. Regarding Prasar Bharati Act, I can say we had a lot of hopes. I have been here for a long time. We fought for a long time for this Prasar Bharati [\[m60\]](#).

We had a dream; we had a background behind our thinking about the role of the BBC and other organizations. But, as I found, actually the Prasar Bharati did not evolve as expected. It is a stereotype thing and is lagging behind. It is not evolving itself with imagination, with planning and covering newer areas. All these things are there. We want to discuss that these things are necessary to have a good discussion about the Prasar Bharati especially after one decade of its functioning.

Secondly, the financial viability is another thing. If it gets money only from the Government then they are forced to obey the Government's orders and its autonomy and independence is hampered. Though ten years have passed, we could not complete that area as to how we can make it viable financially.

I then come to the status of the employees. That is another area. There are 40,000 employees. Where will they go? They are " न घर का, न बाट का ". This is the situation. I don't know whether they will go to the Government or they will remain in the Prasar Bharati Board. The Prasar Bharati Board is incapable of paying. It is a financially deficit organization. They cannot pay their employees. How can organization, which cannot pay its employees, serve the institution in a proper way? It is an institution. You have to do it. I am raising these issues. It is our child. This House has created it. But it did not develop. It is becoming a handicap. It is suffering from different diseases. We have to cure it from all these diseases. That is one area of concern.

I now come to the content of the programme and the sort of programmes it is doing. The other commercial channels, throughout the day, they are not giving any information but they are propagating. They take one incident one day and for the whole day they show it and in the evening a public opinion is formed. Like that, it is not giving any information but it is becoming a channel for propaganda on a particular point and doing so many things. This modern media is playing a destructive role, specially the commercial channels, the modern channels. Sir, it is a destructive role. They are doing some good things. But they are also doing some things which are destructive. Sometimes they create confusion, sometimes rioting, sometimes hatred – all because of their repeating of the telecast items. If there is a good work, it is not a report. But if there is a particular item say a pothole, the whole day they will show the pothole as if there is no road for 100 kilometres and only one pothole is there. Sir, this way they spread half truth which is calculated.

But in the case of Doordarshan, they have played a good role.

they have not given wrong reports. The All India Radio and Doordarshan are famous for their impartiality and good coverage. Though there is some partiality as hon. Member Shrimati Kiran Maheswari has complained, the Government, their people and their Ministers are unduly shown, but overall, we cannot compare All India Radio and Doordarshan with the other channels regarding the impartiality, their coverage, the sincerity and truthfulness with which they show the programmes. We cannot compare our Doordarshan with any private channel.

They may be colourful. They may spend money by using good cameras and all these things. But, content-wise, we cannot say that the Doordarshan is inferior. We all should stand by Doordarshan to protect its character. These are the points.

Now, coming to our style, we have to change our style with the change of age, change of viewership, modern generation viewers etc. We sometimes continue in a fossilised style, old style. People do not like that. We have to think about it and innovate. We have to imagine. Otherwise, what will happen sometimes is that instead of imaging new things, we are copying. We are trying to copy the private channels. That is becoming another wrong thing. We should not copy them. We should imagine and we should evolve new method of style so that it can be attractive and the common people can be attracted to it.

I now come to the quality of the content. We can think of having a channel for children. I request the hon. Minister. You know that the BBC has a channel for the children. Can we not imagine to have such a channel for our country? We discuss so many problems of the children. We should have a channel dedicated to the children of our country.

We have 24-hours channel, fashion channel, this channel, that channel etc. But we have to imagine and find out which is necessary for the country. [\[k61\]](#)

This is an area of concern. Now I come to the issue of priority. Our only priority is cricket. Every day, for whole day, for 24 hours, cricket is there as if there is nothing else in the society. So, the mental make up is also required to be changed, and especially the law-makers and others should be involved in changing it.

Regarding funding, the Ministry should plan how funding to it can be improved to keep its independence also. This Board should also always be not truncated. I would like to ask another question.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We are not discussing the total working of Prasar Bharati. This is only an amendment Bill.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Sir, this is an amendment Bill, but it is very small Bill while there was a demand for a comprehensive amendment Bill. The Supreme Court gave instructions that there should be a comprehensive amendment. The Report of Standing Committee, he quoted also recommended that a comprehensive amendment should be brought. Everybody is demanding for a comprehensive amendment. The 40,000 employees are also demanding this. There are 8,000 posts lying vacant. Where will they go? Will they remain with the Government or go to Prasar Bharati? Everything should be taken into account. There is a necessity to bring a comprehensive amendment, but only this amendment to increase or decrease the age is brought. It should not be like this. Because of that, doubts arise. A Group of Ministers also sat and recommended that there should be a comprehensive amendment. The Supreme Court, the Standing Committee, the Group of Ministers said that there should be a comprehensive amendment. Why is this piece-meal amendment brought? Why has this single-point amendment been brought? These things really raise questions in the minds of the people. So, I would request the hon. Minister that the Government should come clean and clarify all these things. He should also bring a comprehensive amendment as we are all demanding. He should also solve most of the problems on the basis of the review of the last one decade. I think, that will help. If we want to see only one person's interest, it will not help Prasar Bharati; and it will not fulfil the dream with which Prasar Bharati was born. With these words, I thank you.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (DHENKANAL): Sir, I stand today to seriously oppose the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Bill, 2008. From the very manner in which this Bill has been prepared and the statement given by the Minister on July 1, there appears to be a huge contradiction. This Bill, if taken *prima facie*, is a very superficial Bill. It seems like someone in authority in Prasar Bharati probably did not please the powers that be, sufficiently enough that they considered the person eligible to continue in that post.

There was a mindset in the earlier days when AIR was called 'All Indira Radio'. There was also a mindset in the late '80s where people considered that the then Prime Minister, the Congress Prime Minister, had so much exposure on Doordarshan that the word 'burnt out' was used, that he burnt himself out, and the election results of 1989 showed to the nation that over-exposure through the media can definitely harm the person who is in power. But the desire of, I assume, every politician is that this red light should always be burning, should always be on and my voice should be the loudest in the House, my face should always be on the TV screen and my speeches should be always on AIR. So, this 'my' impression has willy-nilly demolished the credibility of both Doordarshan and AIR, as a result of which the creature that is coming out of these two organisations is the Prasar Bharati. [\[SS62\]](#)

It is a welcome step, but it is again initiated by non-Congress Governments in the past of which one of the present Congress Ministers -- who was earlier in the non-Congress Government, namely, Shri S. Jaipal Reddy -- was one of the architects. The Prasar Bharati concept came about when people who loved democracy in this country considered that these strong media should be independent and should strive for the development of the country and not just promote a few individuals.

I come from a Constituency in Orissa, namely, Dhenkanal that has had the pride of giving two Information and Broadcasting Ministers to this nation. It is a pity that today we have come to a level where we -- this august House -- have to hit out and pass a Bill to omit certain individuals. When we talk of the Chairman and when we want to bring down his longevity in the Chair from six years to three years, we take his age limit -- I assume the last person who was there was above 86 years of age, and we have to bring it down to 70 years -- to ensure that certain people are thrown out of their seats. But a time has come when this House and the Government has to consider putting people in Prasar Bharati, who are of age that matches the majority age of this nation.

We are creating programmes in the Government media that nobody wants to watch. Many hon. Members who spoke before me have mentioned this point. Some of them have praised the Government media. Probably, they have felt that in crisis like Nandigram or some such event the Government media gave a very twisted version, which suited some people. But when everybody else was giving different versions and were listening to the people's voices, the impression that went out all over the country was probably more correct than what the Government media had tried to project.

I do not stand here as an apologist for private broadcasters, but today we have to admit that opening up our broadcasting system to private players has definitely brought in competition and better quality of programmes. People are definitely exposed to very many more things today than they were exposed to earlier. But it is a difficult thing *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Satpathy, the time allotted for this discussion is only two hours, and many more hon. Members have to speak on this subject. Therefore, please be brief.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (PURI): Sir, please give him some more time to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : Thank you, Sir. I will be extremely brief. It is very difficult to be judgemental and to say that certain channel is bad or certain programmes are bad. I think that you have to offer today's youth everything that is available in this world, and it is for them to choose what they think is necessary for their growth. But, unfortunately, both your broadcasting arms under the Prasar Bharati have successfully failed to provide this for the youth of India.

It is necessary -- when we see such Bills that are flimsy and do not have much content -- that the hon. Minister starts thinking on the lines of actually giving autonomy to the Prasar Bharati. It is very important that Doordarshan and AIR are made a profit centre by itself in every State.[\[r63\]](#)

You have to compel the people working there -- Doordarshan directors, the All India Radio directors -- that they are accountable not to the Government, but to this House. If the Government has given them money, it is the bounden duty of the Government to definitely finance these organizations till they come off age and become sufficiently economically viable. Till such stage, the Government should help them. But at the same time and as a parallel step, the Government has to ensure that the people who are in-charge of these broadcasting arms make an effort to ensure that it becomes an economically viable and a free profit centre whereby true freedom will be coming down on them. Until that happens, as long as Doordarshan and AIR are at the mercy of the Government, this kind of an interference by politicians and more so by bureaucrats who want to please the politicians for their own benefit will continue.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : I would like to lastly say one thing that although it is a good move to bring down the age, but even 70 years for the Chairman of Prasar Bharati is a very old age. The Government has to seriously consider how to hire private players or people who have experience, successful track records in private broadcasting companies, attract them with good salaries, with good perks, facilities and sufficient freedom so that in the foreseeable future, it will be possible to make both wings of Prasar Bharati competitive players in the field of broadcasting. This field is becoming more and more competitive. In future, it will be a cut-throat race, so it is essential that the Government wakes up to the existing system, instead of making cosmetic changes just for political benefits.

I reaffirm my opposition to this Bill, and thank you for giving me this opportunity.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU (RAJAPUR): Sir, my good friend, a good parliamentarian, and now the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, besides being the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, has issued an Ordinance which I very strongly oppose.

Sir, I really do not understand, first of all, the Government's wisdom of bringing out so many Ordinances during inter-Session period. I do not understand this that suddenly why the Government should start thinking that now their job is not to

govern but to legislate! This is basically an encroachment on the powers inherently provided to the Parliament and, therefore, any Ordinance that is issued should be opposed. But I oppose it mainly because it was introduced by a person who is also the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. I request the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs -- while he is replying on the Bill as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, but on the Ordinance as the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs -- to let us know whether he will agree that an Ordinance like this should be issued.

Sir, what is the urgency? An Ordinance can be issued on a very urgent matter. Here, the urgency, as has been explained, is that suddenly they realized that somebody who is occupying that office as the Chairman of Prasar Bharati is more than 70 years of age. They suddenly realized! Probably, his birth certificate was missing; it was produced and they suddenly realized that, that person who has been doing a good job and, therefore, he was not removed for all these years has started behaving in a manner that he cannot be the Chairman of the Prasar Bharati. So, when this sudden realization came, it prompted the Government to immediately issue the Ordinance. What is the urgency in this? They are now replacing a person who is more than 70 years of age with a person up to 70 years of age.

First of all, I would like to know from my friend, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, what was the urgency in this matter. He should explain this because this is a very important issue. I know now that only efficient people get too many responsibilities. Mr. Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi is so efficient that he has now been made the President of the West Bengal Congress Committee. I heard his speeches. Very eloquently he is talking about how they should have democracy in West Bengal. While he was talking about it, I know he would never like it, I wish to let him know that you cannot have democracy, unless you know the role of Parliament. Can we have democracy without Parliament? This is the fundamental issue and let him explain the urgency. [\[r64\]](#)

I read through the Statements of Objects and Reasons of the Bill very carefully. We are saying that we need younger people in the office. I would like to know the definition of younger here. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you are a talented person and that is why you are occupying such a high office. We need people with knowledge, talent, experience and all that. At the same time, we are saying that if you cross 70 years of age you are not good. I would like to know if Mr. M.V. Kamath -- I do not know his age -- is no longer young. Mr. Kamath is one of the very distinguished journalists. He has been the Editor of Illustrated Weekly of India. He worked as the Foreign Correspondent of Times of India in various countries. He has been one of the great columnists that we have known. I read his writings for a long time and I admire him. However, the Government suddenly wants him out of office.

I would like to know what the logic behind the Government wanting to have a 'younger' person in that office. What is the definition of 'younger'? Is 'younger than M.V. Kamath' the definition of your 'younger'? Younger in comparison to what? The retirement age of a Government Servant is 60 years. If you talk about a younger person, you can talk about a person of less than 60 years of age. If you talk about a younger person than the ones who have already been there as Chief Executives, etc., is their age limit going to be 65 years? So, I really do not know what exactly is meant by this. Therefore, this is something that should be clearly defined.

This Ordinance mentions a very important thing that any person holding office as the Chairman immediately before the commencement of the said Ordinance ceases to hold office as such Chairman, if his appointment is inconsistent with this Subsection, and is not entitled to any compensation because of ceasing to hold the office. So, it looks like that the Ordinance was issued primarily to get rid of one person. Is it so? If it is so, what are the reasons for it? If it was not so, what was the necessity of promulgating this Ordinance?

The history of Prasar Bharati Bill goes back to 1977 when it was introduced in Parliament after the Emergency. At that particular time there were not many private media channels, particularly electronic ones. So, we thought that we really needed public opinion to be generated through electronic media which should not be dominated by the Government. We really wanted that this organisation should function independently, professionally and that it should not be subject to meddling by politicians. That was how Prasar Bharati was created. If you start interfering in its functioning in this manner now, it would really defeat the very purpose of the Bill. I, therefore, would request the Minister to first of all take such steps which will insulate this organisation from political meddling. That will ensure that professional standards are maintained. That will make sure that Prasar Bharati becomes number one media organisation in the country. Despite the fact that we have got so many new channels coming up, this organisation has maintained its dominance. That shows that this organisation has some intrinsic professional strength. We should try to consolidate it and try to improve it. If you want that to happen, we should take necessary steps for that.

The Government is going to appoint a Chairman of Prasar Bharati. Do we have a formal process of appointing the Chairman of that organisation? Is it going to be an independent process? My request to the Minister would be that such appointments should really be kept above politics. A good example for us to follow is that of the BBC. BBC was running a campaign against the Government of Mr. Tony Blair's. As Prime Minister of his country Mr. Blair was not happy with it but there

was nothing he could do to stop it. That was because BBC is an independent organisation. I think the legacy Mr. Dasmunsi should leave behind is to create an organisation which will be totally bereft of any politics, which would be beyond any meddling by politicians. For that to happen, I would request the Minister to suggest to us the measures the he is planning to take for the appointment of a person to that position which will be totally away from political interference.

In today's modern world the media plays a very important role. Public opinion is formed on the basis of media reports. So, we have a great responsibility as Parliament of the country to ensure that the Fifth Estate is protected and promoted properly. In that, Prasar Bharati must play a very important role. I would request the Minister to ensure that the stature of that institution is not damaged in any manner.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (MIDNAPORE): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I stand to support this bill. While going to support the Bill, I would like to say something. Let me first come to the Ordinance. When the hon. Minister for Information and Broadcasting, hon. Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi was sitting in the Opposition benches in the 13th Lok Sabha, I used to see him protesting or registered his objection with regard to the Ordinances, in regard to every Ordinance. But I am astonished and amazed to see that while he is the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, he has got this Ordinance. Ordinance has been promulgated. This is not the only Ordinance. In this Session, we have disposed of till today, I think, more than three Ordinances. Still more Ordinances are pending to be disposed of.

The other day, in this august House, the hon. Law Minister told that he was the last man to go for promulgating Ordinances but he himself piloted that Ordinance. What was the urgency? Whatever may be the explanation, it is not convincing to us. This Ordinance was promulgated on February 7, 2008 and this Budget Session was commenced on February 25, 2008. What was the urgency in between? If the Bill would come directly to this august House for deliberation, I think, heaven would not have fallen. I think, he will satisfy and explain to the hon. Members as to what was the urgency behind promulgating this Ordinance.

Now, I am going to the Bill itself. I do agree with the points which have been made by my predecessors like the hon. Hannan Mollah, even Shri Suresh Prabha. What is the reason for raising the tenure of certain officers? It is quite clear that this Ordinance has been brought with the aim to protect some persons. This point should be made clear. The Prasar Bharati came into existence ten years before and it is an autonomous body. I do not think that it is lagging behind or has not achieved any success. But more has to be done so that the interference of the Government would be less or nil and it should not be guided by a particular political idea. It is not understood as to why in the last ten years since its formation, this has not been fulfilled. Why has such a thing happened in the last ten years? This Bill has been brought before us for adoption but this needs a comprehensive legislation. The time has come to review everything and for bringing out a comprehensive legislation.

Sir, the Minister is aware of the problems of the administrative employees who are engaged or working or posted in Doordarshan, Akashvani and other allied offices. For years together, they have been putting forth their demands before the Government and the hon. Minister is aware of this.[\[r65\]](#)

They are agitating all over the country. They had conducted *dharnas*, *satyagrahas* and other such programmes. The Minister had assured them that something will be done and the matter is under the consideration of the GoM. But till today, no result has come out. I am confident that the Minister will consider their demands and before 31st March, he would do something because it is made known that by 31st March, the 6th Pay Commission Report would come out and if their demands are not settled before 31st March, the interests of the administrative workers of Doordarshan and Prasar Bharti would not be as desired by them. So, I hope that the hon. Minister will think and ponder over it, and do the needful.

Lastly, I would like to say that there are other players globally and on the domestic sector. So, Prasar Bharti should be moving in such a manner that they can achieve better performance and acquire competitiveness.

With these words, I broadly support the Bill with the hope that the Minister would sort out and solve the problems with regard to the employees of Doordarshan and Prasar Bharti.

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत (अजमेर): मान्यवर सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह कहना चाहूंगा कि यह सरकार जो बिल लायी है, इसके पीछे गेलाफाइड इंटेंशन है। अगर प्रसार भारती की स्वायत्ता को मजबूत बनाने की बात होती, अगर प्रसार भारती को प्रोड्यूसिंग इलेक्ट्रॉनिक चैनल्स की प्रतिस्पर्धा में और भी अधिक सशक्त बनाने की बात होती, तो हम जरूर इसका समर्थन करते। पिछले दिनों एम्स के वेणुगोपाल जी को हटाने के लिए इस संसद के अंदर एक बिल लाया गया और जो स्थिति पैदा हुयी, कुछ उसी

प्रकार की स्थिति इस बिल के अंदर भी नजर आ रही है।

महोदय, जैसा कि हमारे मित्रों ने भी कहा कि दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी मिलाकर प्रसार भारती निगम बना था। इनके कारपोरेशन के अध्यक्ष पद पर सरकार चाहती है कि कम उम्र का आदमी हो और इनकी विचारधारा का हो। ये नाम तो ले रहे हैं कि वह कम उम्र का हो, एक्टिव हो, काम करने वाला हो, यह तो बहाना है। एमडी श्री कामथ साहब जिनको पहले वाली सरकार ने अध्यक्ष पद पर रखा था, अब उनकी उम्र 70 साल की हो गयी है, हालांकि उनका वर्ष 2009 में कार्यकाल पूरा होने वाला है। एक साल में कुछ खास घटने वाला तो नहीं है, लेकिन चुनाव नजदीक आ रहे हैं। चुनाव नजदीक आने के कारण यूपीए सरकार चाहती है कि इनकी हां में हां मिलाने वाले, इनके स्वर में दिवंगन करने वाले, अपने मुंह मियां मिट्टू बनने की बात को प्रोत्साहित करने वाले व्यक्ति को उस गद्दी पर बैठाया जाए।

मान्यवर, एक स्वायत्तशासी निगम, जिसे संसद ने बिल पास करके बनाया और आज जो सारे देश की आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन को कंट्रोल करता है, अरबों रूपया जिसमें सरकार का लगा हुआ है, पूर्व से पश्चिम और उत्तर से दक्षिण तक आकाशवाणी और रेडियो के माध्यम से, सरकार उसे अपनी कठपुतली बनाना चाहती है। महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से इसकी निंदा करता हूँ। इनका आरोप है कि ये भाजपा के नजदीक हैं, ऐसी कुछ सरकारी क्षेत्रों में चर्चा है। इस आरोप की आड़ के अंदर, हालांकि इन्होंने उन्हें डिस्टर्ब तो नहीं किया, लेकिन अब बहाना क्या करें? चुनाव सर के ऊपर आ गए और अपनी मनमानी कैसे चलायें, अपनी निरंकुशता और जो इनका एंटीडेमोक्रेसी एक्टिविस्ट है, जो हमने आपातकाल के समय देखा थी, ऐसी स्थिति को लाने के लिए ही ये संसद के माध्यम से इसे लाए हैं। ऐसे छोटे से काम के लिए इन्होंने आर्डिनेंस लागू किया। इसे लागू करके उम्र 70 साल की जगह कम हो जाए, पहले जो इसमें पद पर बैठा हुआ हो, नियमों में असंगत हो, उसे हटा दिया जाए और उसके स्थान पर नया रखा जाए।

[p66]

[N67] अगर सरकार यह सोचती कि आकाशवाणी और प्रसार भारती के जो सामाजिक उद्देश्य हैं, जिन उद्देश्यों को लेकर इसकी स्थापना की गई और सूचना और मनोरंजन को लेकर जनता की जो अपेक्षाएं हैं, उनकी कसौटी पर खास उतरने के लिए इसे बनाते, तो हम इसका पुरजोर समर्थन करते। मुझे आज खेद के साथ कहना पड़ रहा है कि प्रसार भारती दुर्दशा का शिकार हो रहा है। इसलिए अध्यादेश जारी कर जो बिल लेकर आए हैं, इसके पीछे केवल एक व्यक्ति को हटाने की बात है।

मैं आपकी आज्ञा से यहां कोट करना चाहूंगा। ऐसे अध्यादेश को स्वीकृति दी है जिसके जरिए प्रसार भारती एक्ट में बदलाव लाकर इसके अध्यक्ष के पद की अधिकतम उम्र सीमा को 70 साल कर दिया गया है। श्री कामथ का कार्यकाल अगले साल जनवरी, 2009 को खत्म हो रहा है। वर्तमान प्रसार भारती एक्ट में इसके अध्यक्ष के पद की अधिकतम उम्र सीमा के लिए कोई बंधन नहीं है। अब तक जो था, उसमें उम्र के लिए कोई बंधन नहीं था। अब उम्र का बंधन लगाकर कामथ साहब की छुट्टी और अपने नए कठपुतली की नियुक्ति। श्री अनुमम खेर, जो सेंसर बोर्ड के अध्यक्ष थे, इन्होंने उन्हें हटा दिया। श्री अनुपम खेर सारे देश के अंदर जानी-मानी हस्ती हैं। ऐसे लोगों को हटा दिया गया, मुझे यह बड़े खेद के साथ कहना पड़ रहा है। चाहिए यह था कि प्रसारण सेवा और नियामक विधेयक, जो बहुत समय से पेंडिंग है, प्रोड्यूसिंग को नियंत्रित करने के लिए, आचार संहिता बनाने के लिए, उसे लाते। उसे नहीं ला रहे हैं, लेकिन अध्यक्ष को हटाने और उनके पर कतरने की तैयारी हो रही है। मीडिया को नियंत्रित करने का इनका कोई प्रयास नहीं है। हम दूरदर्शन में जैसे कार्यक्रम सोचते थे कि भारत की संस्कृति के अनुरूप, भारत के गौरव के अनुरूप अच्छे कार्यक्रम आएं जो दूसरे इलेक्ट्रॉनिक चैनलों के लिए उदाहरण का काम करेंगे, लेकिन आप उनसे भी गिरे हुए कार्यक्रम, निम्न स्तरीय कार्यक्रम, केवल पैसे कमाने के लिए कर रहे हैं। कहां सरकार का सामाजिक उद्देश्य और कहां कोश पैसे कमाना, इसे उचित नहीं कहा जा सकता।... (व्यवधान)

मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार से कहना चाहूंगा कि प्रोड्यूसिंग को नियंत्रित करने के लिए स्पष्ट बताएं कि प्रसारण सेवा और नियामक विधेयक इस सदन में इस बजट सेशन के अंदर सरकार प्रस्तुत करेगी या नहीं। खेद के साथ कहना पड़ रहा है कि आज प्रसार भारती में अकर्मण्यता का वातावरण है, भ्रष्टाचार फैला हुआ है और जैसे मैंने आरोप लगाया कि जन सेवा संचार माध्यमों को सख्त और अच्छा करने की आवश्यकता थी, वहां उनका स्तर गिराया जा रहा है। सरकार के ढीलेपन के कारण निजी संचार माध्यमों से प्रसार भारती पिछड़ती जा रही है। मंत्री जी, आप नौजवान हैं, सही काम करने वाले हैं, ऐसी आशा थी, लेकिन आपके होते हुए इसे सरकारी भौंपू बनाने का जो प्रयास किया जा रहा है, मैं इसकी भर्त्सना करता हूँ, निन्दा करता हूँ। मैं आपके माध्यम से कहना चाहूंगा कि इसे पेशेवर बनाएं लेकिन रोचकता बनी रहे, विश्वसनीयता बनी रहे, प्रामाणिकता बनी रही, स्वायत्तता बनी रहे, पेशेवर प्रबंधक आए और स्वतंत्रता के साथ प्रसार भारती को फलने-फूलने दें, इसे कठपुतली न बनाएं।

इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ आपने मुझे बोलने का जो समय दिया, उसके प्रति मैं हार्दिक आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ।

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (BERHAMPURE, WEST BENGAL): Sir, I subscribe to the view inherent in the Bill under the nomenclature Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Bill, 2008.

At the outset, I must extend my compliments to the hon. Minister, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi as he had earlier connected to the demand that was aroused before the cricket season in our country. Sir, as you know, when cricket fever struck our countryside, young men and women were not able to get access to the media because private channels were reluctant to transmit their signals to the far-flung areas. [R68]

When young men and women -- who are cricket loving people -- were crazy to have accessibility to the media, at that time, lakhs of people urged upon the hon. Minister to get it done and he had done it on his own initiative. Therefore, he deserves to be appreciated lavishly.

The Bill is aimed to amend Section 6 whereby it is stated that the Chairman shall be part-time member and shall hold office for a term of 3 years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of 70 years which ever is earlier. Second amendment is that the executive member shall be the whole time member and shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until the age of 65 years which ever is earlier. That is why, the scope

of discussion is very much limited in regard to the Bill. But somehow the Opposition is sniffing out the ulterior motive behind the introduction of this Bill which has been piloted by the hon. Minister. May I ask them why are they now projecting Mr. L.K. Advani as the Prime Minister in waiting instead of Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee? Someone may be biologically active but you have to consider the chronology for every human being. They are alleging that we are simply removing someone who is very dear to them. The Government does not nourish any envy to any personality whosoever he may be. But the fact is that now the age of Mr. Kamath, the present incumbent, has reached 86 years and 03 months and the age of retirement will go up to 89 years. So, in the age of 89 years, it is easy to assume that none is so competent at least to preside the Prasar Bharati Board which was established in the wake of Prasar Bharati Act and after the installation of Prasar Bharati Corporation.

If you see the other organisations in our country, you will find that insofar as CAT is concerned, the upper age limit of CAT Chairman is 68 years and the upper age limit of the Chairman of National Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum is 70 years. Simply, the Bill is intending to rationalise the age limit and the tenure of a personality who is supposed to preside over the Prasar Bharati Board as a part-time Chairman. I came to know that even during the Winter Session, the Prasar Bharati Board meeting used to be held in Mumbai instead of Delhi because of the onslaught of winter. We are all proud of Prasar Bharati. दूर-दराज गांवों में रहने वाले गरीब लोग जिस हथियार के तहत सारे हिन्दुस्तान के दर्शन कर सकते हैं, उसका नाम दूरदर्शन है। यह दूरदर्शन हम सबके लिए गर्व का विषय है। [R69]

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that the Government should try and make the Prasar Bharati financially independent. It is because this organisation is being run by way of Grants-in-aid from the Central Exchequer. As was being argued by Shri Prabhu, I would also like to make the point that the first condition for becoming an independent authority would be when this organisation would be able to augment its revenue; would be able to be financially independent; would be able to mobilise resources and furthermore, when it would be able to make optimal utilisation of resources.

Secondly, I would like to request the hon. Minister to digitalise the holdings of Doordarshan so that the national events of importance and also the historical speeches could be preserved for our posterity. I must thank the hon. Minister and also tell him that we all are with him in his venture to make Prasar Bharati and Doordarshan more accessible to the common people and also in his effort to improve upon the quality of production that we expect from him.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am one amongst those who have given notice of disapproval of this Statutory Resolution. On a previous occasion I had pointed out in this House that the Government is misusing this emergency provision in the Constitution. It so happened that when Ordinance on the Forward Contract Regulation was promulgated, the House was in possession of that Bill. That has been made perfectly clear. This also is a clear case of misuse. Why is it so?

This Prasar Bharati Act was passed in 1990. Since that time four Lok Sabhas have been constituted and dissolved. Several Sessions have been held in this House and even this Government has been in power for the last four years. We all knew that the age limit and the duration of the Chairman of Prasar Bharati has not been specified in the Act that was passed in 1990. Eighteen years have passed since then and no Government found any emergency and even this Government, for the last four years, did not find any emergency to come with any amendment in this regard. What is the emergency now for issuing an Ordinance for reducing the age and period of duration of Chairman of Prasar Bharati? I personally do not impute any motives behind this move, but if anybody does, then he cannot be blamed for it. The question is, what is the emergency? We have heard about the sleep of *Kumbhakarna* in the Ramayana, but this Government had a much longer sleep than him and took 18 years to find out any emergency about the fact that the age limit and the duration has not been fixed in the statute. This Government should have done it immediately after it came to power. Did this Government not find any emergency for all these four years?

Sir, I would say that the hon. Minister did not find any emergency for four years for reducing the age limit or for reducing the period of the duration of the Chairman. They did not think that here was a Chairman of an organization who could be thrown out immediately without any Government sanction. That is also there in this Ordinance. It is a routine matter and even for routine matters Government is resorting to Ordinance. The attempt of the Government is to make this Legislature a rubber stamp of the Executive. In case of the Forward Contract Regulation also the same thing happened. Is it not a routine matter? Now, if such organizations would have to compete with the private sector, then the functioning of the Prasar Bharati would have to be improved upon. But the Government did not find any emergency. [R70]

18.00 hrs.

The Government did not think of bringing any legislation to make things better.

Even the Standing Committee of this House had submitted a recommendation for overhauling this particular statute. My dear friend has no voice in this regard. They did not take any action. No amendment Bill was brought before this House. To make

this organization a workable organization, we have thousands and thousands of news readers who are casual workers. Our hon. Minister did not find an emergency in that matter. On providing employment to poor people, he did not find any emergency. There were several recommendations before you. You did not find any emergency in that regard. The only emergency which he found is to curtail the age limit in the period of Chairman and that he should be thrown out without compensation. That is the emergency. All of a sudden, he had a dream and one fine morning, he thought that it is high time to issue an Ordinance. ...(*Interruptions*) Do not repeat such actions.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please hear me. Hon. Members, it is 6 p.m. now and I have a list of more than seven Members to speak on this Bill. I would like to seek the opinion of the House on extending the time of the House. Is it the sense of the House to extend the time of the House by an hour?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): I propose that the time of the House may be extended by an hour. I think that the discussion shall be completed by an hour.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN(BALASORE): Yes Sir, we may extend the time of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. It is agreed that the time of the House is extended by one hour and it will be followed by 'Zero Hour'.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I am told that there are about 40,000 employees working in this institution. Casual labourers and people on deputation have no service conditions. For the last many years, I have been representing before him. But nothing has been done. He did not find any emergency on those things. Even the Standing Committee submitted a report for reforming and overhauling this institution. But nothing has been done. The only emergency which he has found is that the age limit of Chairman should be curtailed. It is not only that. He must be removed without compensation. It is not only in the case of Chairman but this is the case for all the Executive Members also. There also, he has given a provision that they will not get any compensation if they get terminated. What is the purpose of this provision? Is it fair? The service conditions of the employees who are working there day and night are not improved. Their service conditions have not been changed. You do not find any emergency there. You have been there in the Ministry for the last four years. At least you could have given a thought on this matter. You did not find any time to improve the service conditions of the employees of Prasar Bharti numbering about 40,000. It is rather a pity. I am ashamed of it. ...(*Interruptions*) Chairman is an important post and there are Executive Members also. We all know their position. He wanted to terminate the services of these two gentlemen from this organisation and for that purpose, he has resorted to article 123 of the Constitution. You see how far is the emergency provision of the Constitution misused. ...(*Interruptions*) With due respect, I once again appeal to you not to repeat such a thing hereafter. As one of your best friends, I support the Bill which you have moved but do not repeat again in future.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you. The basic purpose of this Bill has been propounded by various Members who spoke before me. I would dwell into paragraph three of the Statement of Objects and Reasons.

It says:

"Since the Prasar Bharati has to compete with the private electronic media houses as well as to achieve the social objectives entrusted upon it by the said Act of Parliament in letter and spirit, it is being felt necessary to rationalize such matters in order to inject sectoral experience to rejuvenate Prasar Bharati and its Board by undertaking of immediate legislation. "

This is the crux of introducing the Bill. I think it is the basic purpose of introducing this Bill. Of course, the age limit of the part-time Chairman has been focused upon; there is a mention about the reduction in the tenure of the Chairman from six to three years; and there is also a mention about fixing the upper age limit for the Chairman.

This is just tinkering with the Act. Though the Act was passed in 1990, it was promulgated only in 1997. Though it has been there for eighteen years, the promulgation took place only ten years back. So, the Government and the people have some experience of how the Prasar Bharati has functioned during these ten years. When we say something about the Prasar Bharati, we have to also discuss how it has functioned. Has it lived up to the expectation of the people that the people had of the Prasar Bharati? I do not subscribe to the view that the Prasar Bharati should compete with private players. The Prasar Bharati has its own mandate; has its own clientele; and it has its own viewers. Those viewers who watch Doordarshan and hear All India Radio seldom see or hear what private television channels telecast. Doordarshan has its own clientele and viewers. Why can the Prasar Bharati not try to improve the clientele and viewers instead of competing with the private television channels?

Every functioning democracy in this world has its own public sector broadcasting organisation. Doordarshan or Prasar Bharati is a public sector broadcasting organization. The public broadcasting organization needs sufficient support from the Government.

18.09 hrs. (Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan *in the Chair*)

I have certain queries to ask. There is a problem of regulation. Should the Government regulate the content? Should the Government regulate the administration? These are two things before the Government and the Parliament to deliberate. I am of the opinion that content should not be regulated by the Government. It should fix the policy. That policy has to be carried out by the Prasar Bharati as well as by the private channels. But the administration should be under its control [MSOffice71].

The different public sector undertakings are independent in their functioning. But, at the same time, they are responsible to the Parliament and also to the Executive. Similarly, Prasar Bharati or this public service broadcaster should be responsible to the Executive and also to the Parliament. But content-wise, it should be independent. By saying this, I would ask the Government one thing. Does this Bill, in any way, create a situation where we are moving in that direction. I would say that we are not doing so. You see the manner in which this Ordinance was promulgated after the Cabinet had taken a decision as to what are the issues which will be discussed in the Budget Session. It has been reported in the media that when this Ordinance was sent to the hon. President for her signature, hardly three weeks' time was left in between. It was promulgated on 7th of February and the Parliament session commenced on 25th of February. Heavens would not have fallen if a regular Bill had come in this Budget Session, as has been reported, and these are very serious matters which need a little bit of clarification from the hon. Minister. Is it true that the CEO wanted to appoint an IAS officer as a Director in the Prasar Bharati or in some posts which was not adhered to by the Chairman? That is why this Ordinance was promulgated in haste. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I will tell you the answer is no.

SHRI B. MAHTAB : Thank you very much. This was reported in the media and I am thankful to the hon. Minister for clarifying this point.

The Chairman is a part-time member and that too for three years. We would like to get a categorical answer that the same Chairman may also be repeated again after completion of three years. There is no bar in the law. The responsibility and accountability are necessary. But through this amendment, is it not the CEO who is becoming more powerful in the Prasar Bharati set up?

I am of the opinion that the Bill does not make Prasar Bharati stronger to compete with private electronic media. But the basic question which is before this country and before this House is how the Prasar Bharati's financial viability be ensured: whether its employees be the Government servants or not, how will it safeguard its autonomy regardless of its financing; and what sort of programmes should its viewers see – who will determine these things? Will it be Prasar Bharati Board or will it be the Executive or the Government that will determine it?

Lastly, as has also been mentioned by one of our respected colleagues earlier, why is the Prasar Bharati Board still truncated? How long will it take to have a full-fledged Prasar Bharati Board? Already ten years have passed. I would urge upon this Government and also the hon. Minister should take sufficient steps to make Prasar Bharati independent in content, but should be responsible to the Executive and also to the Parliament.

श्री नन्द कुमार साय (सरगुजा) : सभापति महोदय, मैं बड़ी उम्मीद कर रहा था कि प्रियंजन जी इस समय एक व्यापक और नियामक विधेयक प्रसार भारती के संबंध में लेकर आएंगे। जिस तरह कई माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा, उसी तरह पूरा सदन भी आश्चर्यचकित है कि इस विधेयक को लाने में इतनी क्या जल्दी थी जिससे ऑर्डिनेंस लाना पड़ा। मैं समझता हूँ कि वह सदन का मनोरंजन करने के लिए ही इसे लेकर आए हैं। इस समय राष्ट्र और समाज के सामने जो अनेक तरह की गड़बड़ियाँ हैं, वह प्रसार भारती विधेयक के माध्यम से दूर हो सकती थीं। लोक शिक्षण कार्यक्रम चलाने की दृष्टि से यदि व्यापक और आचार-संहिता सहित विधेयक लाया जाता तो अच्छा होता और उसकी बहुत जरूरत भी है। मेरा इस संबंध में एक प्रश्न था जिस की प्रश्नोत्तरी नहीं हो पायी। अखबारों में आया था कि मंत्री जी एक व्यापक विधेयक लाने वाले हैं। क्या इसमें बड़े मीडिया घराने वालों का बड़ा विरोध है और वे सहमत नहीं हैं? देश और समाज को बनाना और ठीक रखना है तो जो गड़बड़ियाँ समाज और छोटे बच्चों पर विपरीत प्रभाव डाल रही हैं, उसे रोकने के लिए एक आचार-संहितायुक्त कानून बनाना पड़ेगा और इस काम को जल्दी करना पड़ेगा। समाज में जो लोग आत्महत्या कर रहे हैं, उनकी समस्याएं अलग हैं लेकिन घर-घर में ऐसी स्थिति बन रही है और कुछ चैनल्स इस तरह से दिखा रहे हैं जिससे पति-पत्नी अलग हो गए हैं और बच्चे अलग हो गए हैं। मीडिया में इसे जिस तरह दिखाया जाता है, समाज कहीं न कहीं विघटित होने की स्थिति में न पहुंचे, उसके लिए एक लोक शिक्षण कार्यक्रम चला कर लोगों में धैर्य तथा कठिन परिस्थिति का सामना करने की शक्ति कैसे पैदा हो सकती है, वे दिखाएं। भारतीय वाङ्मय में इसके विविध पहलु हैं। प्रसार भारती मजबूत, शक्तिशाली और व्यापक बोर्ड बनना चाहिए था, जैसा हमारे

मित्तों ने भी कहा है, वह भी नहीं बना है। हमारे शास्त्रों और पुराणों में जो निर्देश हैं, जो धर्म की परिभाषा है, वह उपासना पद्धति नहीं है, संकटों में धैर्य रखने वाले जो गुण हैं, उसे बताया गया है। मनु महाराज ने कहा "धृति क्षमा दमो आस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रिय निग्रहः, धीर विद्या सत्यं अक्रोधो दशकं धर्म लक्षणम्।" पहला धर्म का लक्षण धैर्य है। परीक्षा में फेल होने के डर से बच्चे आज आत्महत्या कर रहे हैं। पाठयक्रमों में विसंगतियां हैं ही, लेकिन समाज में ऐसी परिस्थितियां कैसे उत्पन्न हुईं? देश की सबसे बड़ी सम्पदा जनसम्पदा है। कोई राष्ट्र कितना महान है, उसकी सड़कें, फसलें सब देखा कर अन्दाजा लगाया जा सकता है लेकिन उसकी सबसे महत्वपूर्ण सम्पदा अगर कोई है तो जन सम्पदा है। कोई देश कितना महान है, उसकी जानकारी इस बात से होगी कि वहां के लोग कैसे हैं? लोक शिक्षण का काम इसके माध्यम से भली-भांति हो सकता है। मैं चाहूंगा कि बिना किसी दबाव के, सलाह-मशविरा करके इससे संबंधित एक विधेयक लाया जाए। रट्टिंग कमेटी ने भी सुझाव दिये हैं। एक पूरा बोर्ड बनाएं और व्यापक जन-हित में भारतीय वाङ्मय को प्रतिबिम्बित करते हुए, देश में नए लोक शिक्षण के कार्य को प्रारम्भ करके ऐसा प्रसार भारतीय विधेयक लाएं जिस में प्राइवेट चैनल्स को नियंत्रित किया जा सके। वे क्या दिखाएं, क्या न दिखाएं, इस तरह की चर्चा और विन्ता की जा सके, ऐसा एक विधेयक आप लाएं। इन्होंने विधेयक को लाने में बहुत जल्दी की है। इसमें मनोरंजन के अलावा कोई विषय नहीं है। 80 साल की उम्र में कुंवर सिंह ने तलवार उठायी थी। उम्र बहुत बड़ा बंधन नहीं होती है। उम्र को घटाने और बढ़ाने के लिए राष्ट्रपति को अध्यादेश लाना पड़ा। आप प्रसार भारती के मंत्री हैं। उसमें मनोरंजन भी आता है। सदन का केवल मनोरंजन हुआ है। इस विधेयक में और कुछ नहीं है और इसकी आवश्यकता नहीं है, ऐसा मैं समझता हूँ। मैंने जो बातें रखी हैं, उस पर आप विचार करें और ऐसा एक विधेयक जल्दी लाएं। आपने समय दिया।

श्री रामदास आठवले (पंढरपुर): माननीय सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री श्री प्रियरंजन दास मुंशी यह बिल प्रसार भारती को मजबूत करने के लिए और कम्पीटिशन के लिए लाए हैं। किसी अनुभवी व्यक्ति की आयु कितनी हो, इससे कोई मतलब नहीं होता लेकिन जिसके पास ज्यादा अनुभव होता है वही कम्पीटिशन कर सकता है और इसमें अध्यक्ष की आयु बढ़ाने की बात है। अगर कोई आदमी अच्छा है तो उसे सपोर्ट करने में कोई दिक्कत नहीं होती और अगर सरकार चलानी है तो इस तरह के विधेयक लाने की आवश्यकता है। मैं तो कहता हूँ कि ये विधेयक एक या दो साल पहले लाने की आवश्यकता थी, आपने बहुत देर कर दी है। विपक्ष पक्ष विरोध प्रकट कर रहे हैं, आप उन्हें विरोध करने दो, लिंदा करने दो, हम इस विधेयक को मंजूर करने के लिए और आपकी सपोर्ट के लिए हैं। इसमें कार्यपालक अधिकारी की आयु 62 से 65 वर्ष करने का प्रस्ताव है इसी तरह से उनके कार्यकाल को छः साल से कम करने का प्रस्ताव है। हमारा कार्यकाल पांच साल का है और उनका छः साल का है, उनके कार्यकाल को कम करने के बारे में यह विधेयक लाया गया है। इलैक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया द्वारा सामाजिक उत्थान की प्रवृत्तियों को गतिशील करने के लिए, समाज में जो गलत परंपरा है, उसे खत्म करने के लिए प्रसार भारती को मजबूत करने की आवश्यकता है। जिस तरह से मुम्बई में हिन्दी-मराठी भाषा पर विवाद हुआ था और एक टैक्सी का इंसीडेंट हुआ था और इसी इंसीडेंट को बार-बार दिखाया गया था। हमें इलैक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया से आजादी छीननी नहीं है, उनको आजादी देनी है लेकिन अगर इससे समाज में दूषित परिणाम सामने आए तो इस पर थोड़ा कंट्रोल करने की आवश्यकता है और इस संबंध में बिल लाने की आवश्यकता है। मैं अपनी पार्टी की ओर से प्रसार भारती के इस बिल का समर्थन करता हूँ।

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (KALAHANDI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Bill. The hon. Minister had to bring this Bill just for shunting out somebody. Instead of this, a more comprehensive Bill could have been brought and the problems of the Prasar Bharati, Doordarshan and All India Radio could have been discussed in a better manner.

Sir, the emergency provision of the Constitution should not be used to promulgate an Ordinance in this manner. The Government should show some humanitarian consideration to the person whom they are shunting out and he is nearly 86 years of age. He is not an ordinary person. He has got rich experience in life, he has contributed a lot to the Press and he has written many articles. Right from the day the General Budget was presented in this House, we are discussing about senior citizens and how to give them more and more facilities, but today the Government, through this legislation, is removing a senior citizen without giving him any compensation. This is quite inhuman. So, I think, the Government should think about giving him some compensation or some sort of relief. There is no doubt that they are going to put their own man there. I am reminded of the 1975 Ordinance when the Emergency was imposed in the country. During the Emergency, the Press was completely crushed. From that day, Ordinances are dangerous for the country. This Bill only shows that a kind of favouritism is being adopted.

Sir, I come from a backward area and we have got an All India Radio Station at Bhawanipatna which does not function totally. We require a generator for that. Then, that station is under the financial control of Kolkata. For the accounting work and all that, the people have to go to Kolkata. This should be looked into and changed. [R72]

[r73] Sir, after television, radio has become a low priority. I would request the hon. Minister that all those stations in the country should be upgraded with another station, higher transmitters and FM services, so that the Scheduled areas and remote areas could receive the benefits of the All India Radio and the news.

Sir, lastly, I oppose this Bill because the hon. Minister could have easily brought a comprehensive Bill as they are in power today and the Session is also quite long, it goes up to May. So, they could have easily brought a comprehensive Bill where it could have been discussed in detail.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR (AURANGABAD, BIHAR): Sir, I support the amendment of the Prasar Bharati Act.

A lot is being said with regard to bringing about an Ordinance. I do not see anything unconstitutional in it. After all, the Government has brought a Bill to regularize the Ordinance and it has given a chance to everyone to air his views in the House. We have heard quite a lot of views on this. I see, therefore, no reason why the constitutional provision of introducing an Ordinance should be condemned here. It was a very wise move on the part of the Government to introduce an Ordinance and it has brought this Bill as soon as it can to regularize it.

Having said that, I must say that the Prasar Bharati today is a public service broadcaster and it has to compete with commercial service broadcasters. If the Prasar Bharati is to be expected to compete with the commercial broadcasters, then it also has to have at its disposal an efficient set of people, starting from the Chairman to the whole time Member and to the other Members of the Board.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR : Sir, I have just begun and you want me to stop. I will speak for two minutes. Kindly allow me to speak what I have to say...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (MUVATTUPUZHA): Sir, please allow him to speak, he is the Chairman of the concerned Standing Committee...(Interruptions)

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR : सभापति महोदय, जरा मेरी बात सुन लीजिए। मैं कह रहा हूँ कि जो प्रोविजन्स इस नये बिल में तारे हैं, वे बहुत सही हैं और जरूरी हैं कि प्रसार भारती के काम को, इसकी फंक्शनिंग को, जो लैकलस्टर रही है, इपूव किया जाए और यह तभी इपूव होगा, जब इसमें एवरीपिरियंस भी हो और यूथ भी हो। यूथ का मतलब मैं यह नहीं कहता कि 18 या 20 साल की उम्र हो। मैं कहता हूँ कि कहीं इस समय कोई 70 साल से ऊपर की उम्र का चेयरमैन है और कहीं 80 साल से ऊपर का चेयरमैन है। यह नहीं होना चाहिए। इसमें ऐसे आदमियों को होना चाहिए, जिन्हें प्रशासन का अनुभव हो। अगर सैक्रेटरी लैवल का ऑफिसर चीफ एक्जीक्यूटिव ऑफिसर बनकर प्रसार भारती में जाता है तो उसे टाइम मिलना चाहिए। चूंकि सैक्रेटरी लैवल का ऑफिसर साठ साल की उम्र में रिटायर होता है। लेकिन जब यह बिल बना था, उस समय उसके रिटायरमेंट की उम्र 58 साल थी। इसलिए यदि उसे पांच साल का टेन्योर दिया जायेगा तो जाहिर है कि वह 62 साल से ऊपर जायेगा। इसीलिए 65 साल की उम्र उसके लिए रखी गई है। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह बहुत ही युक्तिसंगत है और इसके लिए हम सरकार की सलाहना करते हैं। रही बात चेयरमैन की, मैं किसी का नाम नहीं लेना चाहता, लेकिन हमारे फ़ाजिल दोस्तों ने एक नाम लिया है। जब उन्होंने नाम लिया है तो मैं बताता हूँ कि यह बिल उन्हें हटाने के लिए नहीं बनाया गया है, यह सिर्फ एक ऐसे चेयरमैन को लाने के लिए बनाया गया है, जिसकी अपर एज लिमिट 70 साल से ऊपर न हो, बल्कि उससे कम हो और उसके लिए तीन साल का अनुभव रखा गया है। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह बहुत बढ़िया है और कोई नई बात नहीं है।

This is similar to the situation that obtains in respect of the Disaster Management Authority. It is similar to the situation that obtains in respect of CAT. क्योंकि देव भाई ने कामत जी का नाम लिया है, मैं आपको बताता हूँ that Kamathji was the Editor of a very important weekly and periodical in this country, *The Illustrated Weekly of India* और जब वह उसके एडीटर थे तो उस समय इलस्ट्रेटेड वीकली की सर्कुलेशन इस मुक्त में मैक्सिमम थी और जब उन्होंने काम छोड़ा तो वीकली खत्म हो गई, डिस्ट्रॉय हो गई।[\[b74\]](#)

उनकी तारीफ़ जब आप कर रहे हैं तो उनकी इस बैकग्राउंड को भी, उनके इस रिकॉर्ड को भी ध्यान में रखिए और यही प्रसार भारती के साथ हुआ है। पिछले 7 साल से जो प्रसार भारती काम कर रहा है, वह बहुत लैकलस्टर रहा है। जिस स्टैंडिंग कमेटी का मैं चेयरमैन हूँ, उसने मिनिस्ट्री को कहा है कि आप अपनी पफॉर्मंस इपूव कीजिए और इपूव करने का तरीका यह है कि वहां का जो पर्सनेल मैनेजमेंट है, उसे इपूव कीजिए। हमारी स्टैंडिंग कमेटी में मैं अकेला नहीं हूँ, उसमें 40 लोग हैं और सबने मिलकर यह रिपोर्ट दी है जिसका मधु भाई ने जिक्र किया था, the 47th Report of the Standing Committee. मिनिस्ट्री ने जो उस पर कार्रवाई की है, देर से की है। उनको यह कार्रवाई पहले करनी चाहिए थी। लेकिन लगता है कि वे स्टैंडिंग कमेटी की रिपोर्ट से प्रभावित हुए हैं और जल्दी-जल्दी करने के लिए वे आर्डिनेंस लाए हैं। इसके लिए मैं उनको कामप्लीमेंट करता हूँ कि उनको यह पहले करना चाहिए था। मैं चाहता हूँ कि जो-जो प्रवधान उन्होंने इस बिल में लगाये हैं, वे बहुत ही उपयुक्त हैं, बहुत ही युक्तिसंगत हैं। मैं उनका पूरी तरह से समर्थन करता हूँ और माननीय मंत्री जी से अनुरोध करता हूँ कि जल्दी से जल्दी इसे लागू करें और लागू करके प्रसार भारती की कार्यशैली को इपूव करें, उसमें सुधार लाएं। आपने मुझे बोलने का समय दिया, इसके लिए मैं आपको बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद करता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Kharabela Swain. Please be brief; there is no time.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Mr. Chairman, Sir, please do not get impatient; I shall be very brief.

Like most of my predecessors, I also fail to understand as to why an Ordinance at all is to be promulgated just to provide an upper-age limit to the Chairman of the Prasar Bharati. The Second provision, the main provision, of this Bill is to change the tenure and upper age limit of Chief Executive Officer from six to five years and from sixty-two years to sixty-five years respectively. But, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, in Para 2, it is written:

"Therefore, it is felt that in the case of Chairman also an upper-age limit of seventy years may be fixed to ensure appointment of comparatively younger talent and experience."

Firstly, for the Chief Executive Officer, you enhanced the upper-age limit from sixty-two years to sixty-five years, and you say that you are bringing in younger talent. Is it not a juxtaposition? I fail to understand that. How can you say that you are bringing new talent by enhancing the age?

The second point is this. As hon. Mahtab ji said, in Para 3 of the Statement of Objects and Reasons it has been provided that the Prasar Bharati has got social objectives and this Bill has been brought to inject sectoral experience to rejuvenate Prasar Bharati and its Board.

By merely enhancing and fixing an upper-age limit, I fail to understand how you are going to inject sectoral experience. The hon. Minister should reply to this question.

All the time, every year, the Prasar Bharati is running into loss. Its main source of income is Cricket and films. Always, all the time, while replying in most of the Committees, the Prasar Bharati officials say that they are incurring loss because they have got social obligations and they are broadcasting programmes on education, health, agriculture, and social development. But, my appeal to the hon. Minister is this. Cannot these programmes on education, health, agricultural and social development marketed? These could be marketed provided we have better professionals. All these programmes can also be marketed.

The Prasar Bharati does not have a sense of professionalism. I will give you just one example. One of the personnel from the NDTV told me that last year almost all the TV channels had gone to Mathura to direct-telecast the Janmashtami programme. Except the Prasar Bharati, the Doordarshan, the highest number of personnel, namely seven, were sent there by Aaj Tak. But, do you know how many persons had gone from Doordarshan? From Doordarshan, 50 persons went there! That is what he was telling me. Had they gone there for sight-seeing or for telecasting the programme?[\[r75\]](#)

This is the high sense of unprofessionalism. Due to this, Doordarshan is incurring loss. So, I would like to make an appeal that more professionals should be brought into Doordarshan and All India Radio.

I now come to the last point. Sir, in my constituency, Balasore in Orissa, there is a place called 'Soro', where the building for commissioning the All India Radio Centre has already been built ten years before but this is not yet being commissioned. During the regime of the NDA Government also, I had appealed to the then hon. Minister on this. If you do not want to commission it, then why did you construct that building at all? It is lying vacant for the last ten years. I would appeal to the hon. Minister that since you have constructed the building, you commission that Station so that people will get some benefit.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav. Please make a short speech and on no account I will allow you to make a lengthy speech. It is very difficult to control you. Please start your speech now.

श्री राम कृपाल यादव (पटना) : सभापति महोदय, मैं अभी बोलने के लिये खड़ा ही हुआ हूँ। मैं आपका आभार मानता हूँ कि आपने मेरा भाषण शुरु करने से पहले ही सावधानी बरतने के लिये कह दिया है। मैं प्रसार भारती (भारतीय प्रसारण निगम) संशोधन विधेयक, 2008 के पक्ष में बोलने के लिये खड़ा हुआ हूँ। सदन में कई तरह की बातें कही गई हैं कि किसी खास आदमी को हटाने के लिये या किसी खास आदमी को लाने के लिये जल्दी-जल्दी यह अध्यादेश लाया गया, उसकी उम्र कम करनी है वगैरह-वगैरह। मैं समझता हूँ कि सरकार ने जो पहल की है कि कम उम्र का और अनुभवी आदमी वेयर करने के लिये होना चाहिये, यह एक उत्तम कदम है। सब आदमियों की आयु की एक सीमा होती है, काम करने की क्षमता होती है, सोचने की क्षमता होती है। कोई आदमी आजीवन काम नहीं कर सकता है और हर आदमी की रिटायरमेंट की आयु होती है लेकिन राजनीति में रिटायरमेंट की कोई आयु नहीं होती है। इसकी लिमिट रखनी चाहिये। हम लोग कब्र में भी जाते हैं तो राजनीति करते रहते हैं। सार्थकता तभी होनी, जब काम करने की क्षमता हो। अगर सोचने की क्षमता नहीं, काम करने की क्षमता नहीं है तो उसे बनाये रखने का क्या औचित्य है? इसलिये सरकार ने यह सही कदम उठाया है।

सभापति महोदय, मैं मंत्री जी से अपील करता हूँ कि यह कार्य शीघ्र किया जाये और किसी सक्षम आदमी को ही लाया जाये। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी के ध्यान में दो-तीन बातें लाना चाहता हूँ। जब प्रसार भारती कायम किया गया तो इसका उद्देश्य था कि यह बिलकुल इंडेपेंडेंट होकर काम करे लेकिन हम समझते हैं कि यह केवल कागज़ पर रह गया। सरकारें आई और चली गई लेकिन उसका वेयरमैन सरकार के प्रभाव में रहा। चाहे उसका सी.ई.ओ. रहा हो, वह सरकार के प्रभाव में काम करता रहा है। यह सरकार का अंग बनकर रह गया है। इसकी शुरुआत जनता पार्टी के समय में हुई, जब प्रतिपक्ष के नेता श्री आडवाणी जी सूचना प्रसारण मंत्री थे। उस समय यह कार्यक्रम लागू किया गया जो उनकी मानसिकता रही कि बी.जे.पी. या आर.एस.एस. जैसे लोग भरे जाते रहे। इसलिये सामने बैठे लोग गलत आरोप लगा रहे हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि वे लोग भी अछूते नहीं हैं। जिसकी सरकार रहती है, उसका भोपू बन कर वह रहता है...(व्यवधान)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : मैं कनकलूड कर रहा हूँ। अभी मुझे दो मिनट भी नहीं हुये हैं।

Sir, you are so cooperative. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are supporting the Bill. What is more to speak?

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : सभापति महोदय, आजकल प्राइवेट चैनल्स आ गये हैं। डी.डी. और रेडियो भी आ गये हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि हमारे पास जो इनफ्रस्ट्रक्चर है, कर्मचारी हैं, वे प्राइवेट चैनल से कम्पीट नहीं कर पाते हैं। यह विन्ता का विषय है। सरकार ने रेडियो के लिये लाइसेंस जारी किये हैं और कई जगह प्राइवेट प्रसारण शुरू हो गया है। दूरदर्शन और रेडियो जब कि अपने हैं, इसलिये लोग इसे देखना कम पसंद करते हैं और प्राइवेट चैनल देखना ज्यादा पसंद करते हैं। हमारा प्रसार भारती घाटे में जा रहा है। इसे कैसे अपग्रेड करें, इसे कैसे कम्पीटीशन में रखें, यह ध्यान में रखना होगा? [s76][s77]

मैं आपसे कह रहा था कि आम तौर पर जानकारी मिलती रही है और माननीय मंत्री जी भी उस पर निश्चित तौर पर निगाह कर रहे होंगे कि भ्रष्टाचार का बोलबाला डिपार्टमेंट में बढ़ता जा रहा है, प्रसार भारती में बढ़ता जा रहा है। कई पहलुओं पर जो बातें आ रही हैं, निश्चित तौर पर उन पर ध्यान देना चाहिए। हमारा जो प्रसार भारती है, चाहे वह दूरदर्शन से काम ले रहा हो या रेडियो से काम ले रहा हो, प्राइवेट चैनलों से कम्पीट करने के लिए उसकी क्षमता अधिक से अधिक होनी चाहिए और अधिक से अधिक प्रयास करना चाहिए।

अंत में एक निवेदन करके मैं बैठ जाऊँगा। यह बात सही है कि जिस तरह से दूरदर्शन पर कई तरह के सीरियल्स आते हैं, अश्लील चित्र दिखाए जाते हैं या कई ऐसी बातें दिखाई जाती हैं जो आपत्तिजनक हैं, उन पर कोई नियंत्रण नहीं हो रहा है। यहाँ तक कि कई तरह के ऐसे चैनल्स भी प्रसारित हो रहे हैं, जो समाज को कुप्राभावित कर रहे हैं। ऐसी बातों पर भी माननीय मंत्री महोदय को ध्यान देना चाहिए। उससे निपटने के लिए एक सख्त कानून बनना चाहिए जिससे दूरदर्शन या टीवी चैनलों के माध्यम से समाज में बड़े पैमाने पर जो क्राइम बढ़ रहा है, कई तरह की नई नई बातें अपने चैनल को बढ़ाने और लोकप्रिय करने के लिए दिखाई जाती हैं, सख्त लोकप्रियता और पैसा हासिल करने के लिए प्राइवेट चैनलों द्वारा इस माध्यम का जो दुरुपयोग किया जा रहा है, उस पर नियंत्रण करना चाहिए। मुझे विश्वास है कि किसी विधेयक द्वारा आप ऐसे चैनलों के विरुद्ध कार्रवाई करने का प्रयास करेंगे। दूरदर्शन और रेडियो जो प्रसार भारती के अंतर्गत काम कर रहा है, सरकारी है, उसको नंबर एक पर करने का हर संभव प्रयास करेंगे और जो इसमें भ्रष्टाचार तंत्र है, उसको दूर करके प्रसार भारती को ढंग से काम करने के लिए उत्साहित करेंगे।

इन्हीं चंद शब्दों के साथ इस विधेयक का समर्थन करते हुए मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Mr. Abu Ayes Mondal. As a special case, I am allowing you. You may speak for a minute.

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL (KATWA): Hon. Chairperson, I want to know an important information from the hon. Minister, which is as follows. In West Bengal, as I know, Prasar Bharati has decided to close down two Low Powered TV centres, namely, Ranaghat and Krishnanagar. I would also like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has decided to close down all the Low Powered TV centres throughout the country. I want to know only this information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. P.S. Gadhavi. You have also to be very pointed and finish your speech within a minute.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (KUTCH): Sir, I would like to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister, as many of my predecessors have said, that there is no need for bringing this Ordinance. You are bringing this Ordinance in haste. I do not want to repeat what others have already said.

Now, Mr. Minister, when you are going to make Prasar Bharati more competitive, let me submit that its competitiveness in the remote areas, particularly in the border areas is less, whereas the signals of the neighbouring country's TV are coming more easily there. Our transmitters are very, very low in our remote areas. I can particularly say about Barmer, Jaisalmer and Kutch districts where people have easy access to see Pakitani TV rather than our Indian TV. So, in order to make Prasar Bharati more competitive, the first and foremost thing is to make it more effective. So, to make Prasar Bharati more effective, what are the steps that the Government is going to take?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for allowing me to reply to this debate. I am equally thankful to all the hon. Members of this august House who have expressed their views in favour and in opposition of this Bill.

Whoever may be in the Government, be it from this side or from that side, the Constitution has provided it the opportunity -- I should not use the word 'power' -- to take up the issue, if they feel it is very important and bring it in the form of an Ordinance. Every Opposition party in every Parliament equally finds very fine tuning to ask the Government to explain as to what was the urgency. [r78]

That is very traditionally welcomed. Sir, while they oppose, they express their concern and we answer, we fulfil our accountability.

There was an Ordinance called POTA which even the Government of that day failed, not even in one House but to bring it in two Houses to pass it. I do not question the competence.

Sir, the Ordinance route even in Prasar Bharati is not new. First of all, I would like to place this before you if my memory is all okay from the past. It is true that they claim that for democracy, independence, autonomy, objectivity, we brought Prasar Bharati. No, it is not. When was it brought? It was in 1990. Why the 1990 law had to wait for seven years to get its legislative exposure? Have we ever discussed that? Championing the cause of democracy is one and understanding the viability of the employees involved there is the other. Prasar Bharati had to inherit lock, stock and barrel the people who used to work with All-India Radio and Doordarshan. It is huge. I do not say they have done wrong. They have done the good job. They tried their best. There was agitation. There were problems, this and that. Finally, in 1997, you found the light of the day.

In any way, I am not responding to all the issues today because it will be 10 o'clock in the night. But, Sir, I will appeal to you that if the House agrees to discuss the entire functioning of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry on the occasion of Demands for Grants, I will certainly respond again all the issues you have raised. I am limited, today, to two aspects. The first aspect is, what is the urgency to bring the Ordinance? The second aspect, it is the first effort to look into it.

First of all, I will have to make a few corrections. The first correction is that the Supreme Court never gave a judgement or direction to the Government for a comprehensive arrangement or amendment of the Prasar Bharati Act. I would like to correct that. The Supreme Court gave a direction to the Government about the status of the employees and other things to be disposed at the earliest. This is my first correction.

The second correction is that the Standing Committee very rightly observed about the entire functioning of Prasar Bharati and directed, I should say, recommended and that is the spirit of this Parliament for a comprehensive examination of the whole matter together appointing a Group of Ministers and to come out with a decision.

There, you are partly correct. Hannan Mollahji, a distinguished colleague of ours, always speaks out materially, with solid and transparent views of the whole object of Prasar Bharati. The GoM has not yet completed its final deliberation. I am really hopeful that by the end of this month or early April, the final deliberation will be concluded. Before that, for financial restructuring, how to accommodate the employees, this issue and that issue, in a comprehensive approach, I am having, this week the first meeting with the Finance Minister with our presentation and then we will be going for the final reporting to the GoM. I am absolutely hopeful that all the sufferings, misgivings and pains that the employees are having, whether they are in Prasar Bharati or they are in Government, if they are in Government, what is their final status all these issues will be addressed. But before that, I would like to assure Prabodh Pandaji and Hannan Mollahji that we have already informed the GoM and informed the Finance Ministry that those who are enjoying the Government employee status or deemed position status, should be covered by the Sixth Pay Commission. We have already conveyed that.

Therefore, we are taking the whole thing in a very holistic manner. I would tell you, Sir, today in this House that I am one with everyone. Prasar Bharati has no future if it is not managed in a professional orientation of the day, right from its marketing, programming, administration, etc.[\[m79\]](#)

That needs a total overhauling and that overhauling step can only be taken after the GoM's recommendations are accepted by the Cabinet. I am confident that the UPA Government, before completing the term, shall come back to the House with this comprehensive announcement. I am telling you with authority. It will be done.

I will come to the matter of the employees. The distinguished colleagues are here both from that side and this side. Yes, Sir; the employees are in a great hardship. I am the Minister. I met, not less than five or seven times, with various kinds of employees' organizations. I understand their pain. I even visited a few Kendras where I found that the anchors, even the newsreaders who read the news in the night, even women, do not have proper toilet facility or they do not have place to sit. I know it. I know the inner problems. Accordingly, I am moving from one State after the other. But I, now, come back to the main crux of the issue of the Ordinance.

From this Ordinance, I do not know how Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat has suddenly discovered हम लोग सुनते हैं कि इसके वेयरमैन भा.ज.पा. के साथ जुड़े हुए थे। आपको यह खबर है, लेकिन मुझे तो यह खबर अभी मिली है। अगर मुझे पहले मिलती, तो मैं सरकार आने के पहले दिन ही कहता कि इनके साथ हमारा कोई संबंध नहीं है, लेकिन हमारा ऐसा कोई मोटिव नहीं है। आपने यह सूचना देकर, मेरे ज्ञान में वृद्धि की है। हमें ऐसी कोई सूचना नहीं थी कि कमाल जी, भा.ज.पा. के नजदीक हैं। आपने यह जिक्र कर के, स्वयं बता दिया कि आप कैसे इसे चलाते थे। हम इस ढंग से नहीं चलाते हैं। हमारी आबजैक्टिविटी कुछ अलग है।

सर, 15 अगस्त और दि एनीवर्सरी ऑफ सिक्सटियथ ईयर्स ऑफ इंडिपेंडेंस डे पर झंडा फहराने की टेलीवीजन पर कैशेट देखिए। उस दिन डॉ. मनमोहन सिंह जी को झंडा फहराना था, क्योंकि वे देश के प्रधान मंत्री थे। हम डिवटेड नहीं करते और न इंटरफियर करते हैं। The Minister has no right to interfere in the autonomy of Prasar Bharati. Informally they came to ask – how do we celebrate tomorrow, विल्डन को लेकर, I did say that the first

job of yours is in the 60th anniversary of flag-hoisting ceremony, all the hon. Prime Ministers of this country who had hoisted the flag, they should be shown first irrespective of the Party lines. आप गौर से देखिए, श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जी कैसे झंडा फहराते हैं, श्री विश्वनाथ प्रताप सिंह जी कैसे झंडा फहराते हैं और श्री देवेगौडा ने कैसे झंडा फहराया। इन सबको दिखाने के बाद हमने डॉ. मनमोहन सिंह जी को मौका दिया। You try to understand the objectivity as to how we are trying to persuade them. प्रो. रासा सिंह जी, मैं आपको लेडी उद्घोषक का बुलेटिन सुनाऊंगा, आपकी आवाज, आपके 377 के अधीन मामलों के बारे में आकाशवाणी पर जमकर बोलते हैं, कोई और चैनल नहीं बोलता है। आप ही का नाम बार-बार आता है। कभी-कभी आपके मैसेज गुरसा हो जाते हैं कि उन्हीं का नाम, आकाशवाणी से बार-बार क्यों बोलते हैं। मैंने कहा कि आप क्यों गुरसा होते हो, वे ज्यादा बोलते हैं। इसलिए I tell you – do not be under any impression that we are trying to politicise the whole thing. Hon. Member Shri Suresh Prabhu is not here. I would have corrected him. He said that Mr. Tony Blair was not happy by BBC; even then nothing has happened. No.

Our Doordarshan is much better than BBC in terms of objectivity. The Doordarshan panel has a right to discuss the good or bad about the nuclear deal. But in BBC, I tell you today, on the issue of weapons of mass destruction, the news which came out in BBC was that it was dismissed lock, stock and barrel and not a single debate was held in the House of Commons. You try to understand - our objectivity is much greater. Naturally, let us not give a political input to it but come to the practical sense.

Let us now come to the issue of urgency. On the one hand we are talking to think of a professional orientation in Doordarshan. Hon. Member Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab is here. The country is going in a uniform world platform to fight the menace of the adverse campaign and to defend the public service obligation. The first motto of Prasar Bharati is public service obligation. You tell me. All of you are here. Why should Prasar Bharati be answerable to private channels? The Prasar Bharati is not answerable to the private channels. Whether the private channels are doing the right or the wrong, it should be the duty of the Government to think of what kind of action to be taken.

This Parliament has passed the Cable Network (Regulation) Act, 1995. On that basis we issue show-cause notices and we issue adversaries. Shrimati Kiran Maheswari is not here. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat is here. You say that this Government is trying to project all the nuisance in the television, doing nothing. हर बार गिरता जा रहा है। No. I can prove it on record when the debate will start. इस यू.पी.ए. सरकार ने प्रोड्यूसर चैनलों को जितने शो-कॉज नोटिस इश्यू किए हैं और कुछ को बैन भी किया है, वह एन.डी.ए. की तुलना में हजार गुना ज्यादा है। But, I do not believe that by confronting the channel and fighting with the media you prove yourself very strong. No. In democracy, I believe in the policy of persuasion, negotiation and dialogue. [k80]डायलॉग परसूएशन और नैगोसिएशन में जितना फायदा होता है, उतना फायदा उण्डा दिखाकर नहीं मिलता है। When the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, which is ruled by BJP, Vasundhara Raje was in a big problem - he knows what that problem was - my Prime Minister told me that we should not look at politics. Chief Minister of Punjab is also not from our party. The Prime Minister said, "Do not look at politics. Call the private channels, take their cooperation and see how to reduce tension and how to convey the message." I did so. Some channels did not agree. उनको मैंने चाय पर बुलाया और हाथ जोड़कर कहा कि हमारा वसुन्धरा जी के साथ चाहे जो भी राजनैतिक विरोध हो, लेकिन आप माहौल ठीक करने में सहयोग कीजिए। एक जिम्मेदारी होती है, जिम्मेदार सरकार की, उसे ही हमने निभाया है। आप लोग पूछिए चैनल्स से, हमने रात के दो-दो बजे फोन किया है और कहा है कि आज जो आपने आग लगाते हुए दिखाया, कल मत दिखाइया। हम उन्हें डिक्टेट नहीं करते हैं। बातचीत से काम करने पर देश ज्यादा मजबूत होता है, डिक्टेट करने से नहीं। आपने कहा कि हम लोग रेगुलेशन लेकर क्यों नहीं आए? आधु प्रदेश हाई कोर्ट ने इस विषय में आदेश दिया हुआ है। पूरा रेगुलेशन तैयार हो चुका है, उस पर बहस हो चुकी है, उसे वेबसाइट पर डालकर सबके ओपीनियन ले लिए गए हैं, कन्सल्टेटिव कमेटी ने भी इजाजत दे दी है, कान्टेंट पर भी बहस करीब-करीब पूरी हो चुकी है। फिर भी मैं समझता हूँ कि आखिरी दम तक सभी को साथ लेकर इसे लागू किया जाए, किसी को नाराज करके नहीं, जबरदस्ती से नहीं। इसीलिए थोड़ी देर हुई है।

I want to inform the House, Sir, today that our Content Code is almost ready. Our Content Code and Programme Code in a refined form will come very shortly. That Programme Code and Content Code will not leave any room for any media body or any channel to say that the Government is interfering because in a country, in a democracy, trust, faith and understanding pay you more than giving a direction. We have learnt that. This is the trend of modern democracy.

Now bad things do come. Did we not ban a channel for one month or two months? Did we not ban a channel for showing wrong things in the night, for three months? We did and again, they reconciled. They came back and changed their attitude. Every moment you should know that district monitoring authority is DM and DSP. Do you want to change that provision? While sitting in Delhi, how can you know in which village, which cable operator is showing what? Your accountable officer should do it. I tell you that Prasar Bharati has no business to do that. Prasar Bharati's business is to carry the public service obligation.

आप लोगों को तो आज ताली बजानी चाहिए थी। असम में जब नेशनल गेम्स को कवर करने के लिए डर की वजह से कोई चैनल नहीं गया था, it is only the Doordarshan which covered the entire National Games. You should know that because उसको ज्यादा पैसा नहीं मिलता है।

आप लोग बहुत कहते हैं कि प्रोफेशनल्स को लाओ। Ninety per cent of the channels are having a voucher payment rule and they dismiss their people within 24 hours and do not give them any compensation also. We cannot do it in a broadcaster having public service obligation. In Doordarshan, our liability is more. Therefore, you should try to appreciate the balance.

Now, the urgency is that we are having the First Commonwealth Youth Games in Pune in August, 2008, and Commonwealth Games in 2010 in India. Prasar Bharati has been chosen as the dedicated host broadcaster. Frequent meetings are required not only of the Board but the entire management. Frequent policy planning and quality planning is required with the

approval of the Board. These things cannot be done by the Minister or the Ministry. There is a Board. With all my regards to all the incumbents of Prasar Bharati, we felt that it is required for future. I had interactions with all the international experts as to what kind of CEO you want to bring. Yes, till then, the trend was to bring a senior Secretary of the bureaucracy or to bring a senior man of the administration and put him there. I can cite ten names of NDA Government as to how they did it. अपूवत भी प्रसार भारती ने नहीं किया, एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव आर्डर से एपॉइंट कर दिया गया था। मेरे पास इसके दस्तावेज हैं, लेकिन मैं आप लोगों को छोटा नहीं करना चाहता हूँ। We found that the international opinion is that you cannot get a professional competent CEO if you just seal his tenure within 61 or 62 years. I asked 'why'. They said that most of the professionals who come out from that line, want a stable time to plan and to act and then go to other assigned duties and other areas. [SS81]

19.00 hrs.

I have checked up 22 organisations of India, and 35 organisations of the whole world where the competent CEO's age is 65 years, and the tenure would be five years and not six years. Therefore, it is not targeting one man. If somebody stays there for two years, then it does not mean that he will change this Government and bring your Government. अगर ऐसा होता तो दुनिया में आर्डिनेंस से ऐसा होता कि सरकार बिराओ, सरकार लाओ, लेकिन ऐसा होता है क्या? ऐसा कभी नहीं हुआ।

If we had any bad intention to change the Chairman, then we have taken the office in 2004 and we could have done it in 2005. Why would we keep it pending? It is not by malice. Nowhere in the world have we found any law that said that an unending term of year and age is permitted to become a part-time Chairman. The part-time Chairman is not a salaried man. He keeps attending the meeting and is paid fees between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 5,000. There is no salary, bonus or DA. Therefore, the compensation clause does not arise at all in such an Ordinance. Naturally, ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, please wait for one minute. The time of the House was extended till 7 o'clock, which is over. Therefore, if the House agrees, we will extend the time of the House by one more hour.

...(*Interruptions*)

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes, Sir.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I will conclude just now. Please give me five minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, the House agrees to it.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Therefore, this amendment is not to insult or humiliate any individual. We salute anyone who worked here. The first Chairman was a great man. He died prematurely, namely, Shri Nikhil Chakravarty. He could not complete his term. We have no malice to anyone as to who did what. My only appeal to you is to give a message to the Commonwealth Games International Bodies that our Prasar Bharati Board is tuning up with the recent challenge, and infuse little dynamism in CEO's term. Suppose, I take someone at 67 years, then he cannot stay for more than three years or if a professional comes at 65 years, then he cannot stay there after 68 years. Yes, it can be done if you reelect him.

A question was asked as to how to elect them. We have not changed this law from the days of Shri Advani's Bill; from the days of Shri Jaipal Reddy's Bill and from the days of all the Governments. The selection criterion is as simple as section four. The Chairman of the Council of States is the Vice-President of India and the Chairman of the Press Council is the nominee of the hon. President because she only will select who will be the Chairman and CEO. It is not done by a Minister and not by a political party. We have not amended that practice, and we will not amend it.

This is the limited intention of bringing this amendment, and the comprehensive amendment, as per the GoM, will take care of employees first. Shri Prabodh Panda and Shri Hannan Mollah, I would like to tell that not a single employee's interest of any category -- be it technician, engineering, regular -- would be harmed. Hence, I am struggling for them as their spokesman in the GoM.

With these words, I request you that this Bill may be approved by this House. I conclude my observations because the disapproval notice is already moved. Naturally, it is the time of the mover. Let him conclude his views, and then I will do it. I will appeal to him कि हमारा कोई उद्देश्य नहीं है। मैं तो मोहन सिंह जी से हाथ जोड़कर अनुरोध करूंगा कि आप कृपा करके इसको विथड्र कर लीजिए और हमें ताकत दीजिए।

श्री मोहन सिंह : इसमें कोई कन्वल्सिडिंग स्पीच तो होती नहीं, लेकिन चूंकि मंत्री जी ने अपने जवाब में इस बात का भरपूर आश्वासन दिया है कि इस पार्लियामेंट सेशन के

सैंकिण्ड लैग में इनके विभाग पर एक लम्बी बहस होगी और बहुत जल्दी ये इस सम्बन्ध में एक कॉम्प्रीहेंसिव बिल लाएंगे।

हमको चिन्ता केवल इस बात से होती है कि 1977 में बी.बी.सी. की तर्ज पर एक इंडिपेंडेंट ब्रॉडकास्टिंग कन्सर्न इस देश में लागू करने की बात सोची गई, लेकिन पहला विधेयक इस सम्बन्ध में 11वीं लोक सभा में आया और जयपाल रेड्डी जी द्वारा प्रस्तुत किया गया, जब संयुक्त मोर्चा की सरकार थी। वह पार्लियामेंट भी चली गई। 12वीं लोक सभा में जब श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज जी मिनिस्टर हुईं तो वे इसका विधेयक लाईं। [R82]

महोदय, 12वीं लोकसभा के बाद यह 14वीं लोकसभा है और इसका भी यह समापन वर्ष है। मैं ऐसा समझता हूँ कि प्रसार भारती का कुछ दुर्भाग्य है कि इसके बारे में एक सदन, दूसरा सदन, तीसरा सदन और यह निरंतर चलता रहता है और अपने दुर्भाग्य के लिए इस विभाग के जो अधिकारी और कर्मचारी हैं, हमें और आपको कोसते रहते हैं। इसलिए मैं मंत्री जी से चाहूँगा कि जिस चीज का वचन उन्होंने इस सदन में दिया है, उस पर गंभीरतापूर्वक अमल करने की पहल करेंगे और उनकी बात पर विश्वास करते हुए, डिस-अपूवल का जो रिजोल्यूशन है, महोदय, मैं उसे आपकी और सदन की अनुमति से वापस लेने की इजाजत चाहता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN : Has the hon. Member leave of the House to withdraw the Resolution?

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill. The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up matters pertaining to 'Zero Hour'.