Implementation of Prasar Bharati Act

1904. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990 has not been fully implemented till date;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is a question mark on the so-called autonomy given to Prasar Bharati under the Act;

(d) if so, the extent to which the Prasar Bharati is autonomous; and

(e) whether there is a case for giving further or complete autonomy to Prasar Bharati?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) and (b) Implementation of the Act is an ongoing process. A few sections in the Act have not yet been fully implemented. Section 10 on the establishment of Recruitment Boards and Section 11 regarding transfer of service of existing employees to the Corporation could not be implemented as there was strong opposition from the employees against absorption in Prasar Bharati. Sections 13 on Parliamentary Committee, Section. 14 and 15 on the Broadcasting Council have not been implemented and the need for these provisions is under review.

(c) While Prasar Bharati enjoys autonomy in accordance with the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990, the Standing Committee on Information Technology in its Forty-Seventh Report, June 2007 has gone into the issue of autonomy of Prasar Bharati. The Committee in its observations mentioned that Section 32 of the Prasar Bharati Act vests a whole lot of powers on the Government for making rules with regard to service conditions, salary and allowances etc. and taking decisions with regard to investing of its funds, preparation of annual statement of accounts, preparation of annual reports etc. It was also observed that whatever might have been the compulsions for retaining these powers with the Government, the provisions are serious impediments coming in the way of autonomy of Prasar Bharati and fulfilling the avowed objectives of the Corporation.

(d) and (e) Prasar Bharati has been conceived as an autonomous Corporation governed by the provisions contained in Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990. It is only with respect to items mentioned under Section 32 and certain items mentioned in Section 33 which mainly relate to salary and allowances that Central Government has been assigned some very restricted role.