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Title: Matters relating to Prasar Bharti's 'Commissioned Programme' for the North-Eastern region.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL (DIBRUGARH): Hon. Speaker Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me this special opportunity.

Sir, as you are well aware Doordarshan's commissioned programmes were originally mooted as a part of the Prime Minister's special software package for the North-East and Jammu and Kashmir only. In doing so, the idea was to focus

on these two regions of the country afflicted by myriad contemporary challenges and crisis, in the right perspective. The subjects for commissioned programmes were also accordingly chosen with the view to highlight the crisis-ridden societies of North-East and Jammu and Kashmir in the right perspective by competent local producers familiar with local nuances and challenges confronting the societies.

It may be noted here that the special software package in the form of commissioned programmes have been a fillip to the television industries of the North-East, particularly Assam and Manipur which already had established film industries. This has also resulted in the rise of trained and efficient technicians in the field of television production in the region. And in the absence of alternative production means, unlike the rest of the country, the local TV industry of the North-East is solely dependent on commissioned programmes for sustenance.

While the previous Prasar Bharati Notifications were specific on the commissioned programmes which were meant for the region only, the current Notification does not have any mention of the term North-East at all. Instead, the authorities have opened up commissioned programmes meant for PPC (North-East) to producers from outside the North-East. Such a move is grossly violative of the true purpose and spirits of the special software package which is a part of development initiative of the quaint region. The opening up of the commissioned programmes has resulted in large scale influx of outside North-East producers and big production houses of the country whose priorities and interests are far removed from development of the crisis afflicted region. Besides, such manipulation of the policy has occurred despite the availability of highly competent professional in the region capable of good quality productions, and who are also committed to North-East.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the occasion to read. Please conclude. You have made your point.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL : Sir, I want to highlight this particular point because this particular programme was only meant for the North-East producers. Now, they are going to accommodate the producers from outside. Just to honour the sentiment of the North-East people, the Prasar Bharati should strictly allow the North-East producers to make movie and television programmes on the dialects of North-East and not in Hindi. I am not anti-Hindi. But just to encourage the local languages and local dialects, they should encourage, particularly the local languages and dialects. This has to be inducted into the programme. For your information, Sir, more than hundreds of producers are staging a hunger strike in protest against this particular move of the Prasar Bharati. So, this should be given special consideration.