

# PUBLIC BROADCASTING AUTONOMY

# CONCEPTS

- Public Broadcasting?
- Autonomy?

## EARLY YEARS

- 1923 Club, amateur activity
- 1930, unviable stations request state support
- British colonial govt takes over
- BBC personnel, Goyder and Fielden arrive
- 1936, renames radio as All India Radio

## POST-INDEPENDENCE

- First suggestion for autonomy 1948
- Chanda Committee in 1966
- Verghese Committee submits Akash Bharati report in 1978

# AKASH BHARATI RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create National Broadcast Trust
- Chairman with 12 to 21 members. Experts in finance and broadcasting issues among them
- Chairman to be selected from a short-listed recommendation of Chairman UPSC, Chief Justice of India and Lok Pal by the President of India
- Members to be eminent persons from diverse fields
- Trust answerable to the Parliament
- Audited by independent auditors
- Scrap Broadcast wing of Information and Broadcasting ministry

# AKASH BHARATI RECOMMENDATIONS

- Franchise stations to educational institutions for diversity in programming
- Decentralise structure and reporting mechanisms to give freedom for decision-making at the regional/local stations
- Advertisement free
- Grievance mechanism that receives and addresses complaints, headed by a retired judge and two members.

## PRASAR BHARATI BILL OF JANATA GOVT 1979

- Rejected National Broadcast Trust, recommended Corporation
- Chairman with 12 to 21 members
- Chairman to be selected from a short-listed recommendation of Chairman Rajya Sabha, Chairman Press Council, and a nominee of the President by the President of India
- Instead of the Trust answerable to the Parliament, Ex-officio members from Ministry of Finance and Ministry of MIB
- Audited by CAG as any dept of govvt
- Broadcast wing of Information and Broadcasting ministry strengthened

## PRASAR BHARATI BILL OF JANATA GOVT 1979

- No reference to franchise stations to educational institutions for diversity in programming
- No reference to decentralised structure and reporting mechanisms to give freedom for decision-making at the regional/local stations
- No reference to advertisement free broadcasting



## AFTER PRASAR BHARATI BILL OF JANATA GOVT

- Bill lapsed before passing as the govt fell
- Congress returns to power
- No further attention to autonomy bill

## SECOND PRASAR BHARATI BILL OF NF GOVT 1989

- Corporation headed by a Chairman and Board of 14 members.
- Ex-officio members for finance and personnel and one representative from the I&B Ministry and two representatives from employees (one from content, one from engineering)
- Chairman will be selected by the President of India from a list of nominees recommended by the selection committee headed by Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Chairman Press Council and a nominee of the President.

## SECOND PRASAR BHARATI BILL OF NF GOVT 1989

- Transfer of services of employees to the Corporation
- Constitution of a Recruitment Board
- Section 12(2)(b): Safeguarding the citizen's right be informed freely, truthfully, and objectively on all matters of public interest national or international, and presenting a fair and balanced flow of information including contrasting views without advocating any ideology of its own.
- Section 13:A Committee of 22 MPs (15 from Lok Sabha and 7 from Rajya Sabha) to oversee that the Corporation discharges its functions in accordance with the Act

## SECOND PRASAR BHARATI BILL OF NF GOVT 1989

- Complaints Council called Broadcasting Council with a President and 10 members to be established, all persons of eminence.
- 4 of them will be 2 MPs each, nominated by speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairman Rajya Sabha
- The Bill became an Act after it was passed in 1990 with 65 amendments
- It was not notified till 1997

# AUTONOMY AND ITS RELEVANCE AFTER 1991

- MIB vs Bengal Cricket Board 1995
- the airwaves/frequencies are a public property and are also limited
- The right to use the airwaves and the content of the programmes therefore, needs regulation for balancing it and as well as to prevent monopoly of information and views relayed, which is a potential danger flowing from the concentration of the right to broadcast/telecast in the hands either of a central agency or of few private affluent broadcasters.