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Prasar Bharati policies ‘old, incorrect’: Jawhar Sircar

Policies framed by the Prasar Bharati are "old and incorrect" and need to be reviewed, according to the public broadcaster's Chief Executive Officer, Jawhar Sircar. Sircar was referring to media reports about the All India Radio's 'sacking' of 100 casual RJs, above 35 years old, working at two Kolkata stations — FM Rainbow and FM Gold - earlier this month with a communique from the AIR director-general.

"I was not consulted in this matter. The notice should not have been served on the first hand. But I will like to clear that nobody was sacked. It was quite mischievous. We are looking into the matter and the policy is under review," he said.

Incidentally, Sircar, soon after the 'sacked' RJs' held a press conference in this connection, had tweeted: "We told the DG not to sack. (This is) some mischief! Policy is

under review." Asked what would be the status of those RJs if they fail to clear the voice modulation test, as suggested by the Prasar Bharati panel, Sircar said: "Let's see... Every profession needs skill. After all the taxpayers' money demands satisfaction." "But I will like to stress here that windows are open and age is never be the criteria," he added.

In fact, the Prasar Bharati in a statement had stated that as a gesture of goodwill of the services of the casual announcers, RJs and anchors, its review panel has decided to subject the RJs — both casual and those aspiring to join the ranks, to a skill test.

The RJs, it should be mentioned here, were recruited over the last two decades after written and voice tests. Reports also suggested that the move to remove the RJs above 35 years, started last December with the AIR's Director General' directive on the age limit of the two FM channels.

Sircar, however, sounded a bit unhappy with the 'sacked' RJs going to the press without consulting him. "They (the sacked RJs) should not have gone to the press and instead could have written to me... After all I am also from Kolkata and I will be the best person to understand the matter," he said.