

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6481  
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2002  
SET TOP BOX  
VILAS BABURAO MUTTEMWAR

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

- (a) whether several private channels have sought the permission of the Government for making it mandatory for pay channels to be routed through a set-top box;
- (b) if so, the viewers are to be benefited by the proposed system;
- (c) the cost the viewers have to bear to avail of the benefit of the either Direct To Home Service or the set-box facility;
- (d) whether the Government have taken any decision with regard to the private channels for the proposed system; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a): Government had constituted a Task Force consisting of Stake holders including the representatives of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Cable Operators, Multi Service Operators (MSOs) and Broadcasters to examine requests from the stake holders for mandating Conditional Access System. The Task Force has since given its recommendations which, inter-alia, include mandatory viewing of Pay channels through a set top box.

(b): Yes, Sir.

(c): Cost of Set-Top Boxes need not necessarily be borne by the subscribers. It could be met by the broadcasters or cable service providers or subscribers or a combination thereof depending upon the market dynamics. Direct-to-Home Service generally targets a niche audience with higher paying capacity, who would like to view more channels including premium channels, and are willing to make payment for choice of service and channels.

(d) & (e): It is proposed to amend the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 to empower the Government to mandate in a phased manner, installation of an addressable system for viewing pay channels.