

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3212
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2000
JUDICIAL POWER TO PRESS COUNCIL OF INDIA
JITENDRA PRASADA

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

(a) whether the Press Council of India has recommended to the Government to grant it judicial powers to prosecute news organisations if they do not follow the council's judgement; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE & COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Press Council of India has sought power of punishment for contempt through an amendment to the Press Council Act. The Press Council has proposed that non-compliance or incomplete or inadequate compliance of its directions under Section 14 or Section 15 of the Press Council Act, 1978 will amount to the contempt of the Council. For such contempt, the Press Council shall have, and exercise, the same jurisdiction, powers and authority in respect of contempt of itself, as a High Court has and may exercise. For this purpose, the provisions of the Contempt of Court Act, 1971 (70 of 1971), shall have effect, subject to the modification that the references therein to a High Court shall be construed as including a reference to the Press Council of India. The proposal is for a Legislative amendment, which requires inter-ministerial consultations.