

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:137
ANSWERED ON:23.02.2010
NEW CONTENT CODE FOR ADVERTISEMENT
Agarwal Shri Jai Prakash

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to implement new content code for regulating the content of advertisements so as to avoid adverse impact on children in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has conducted/proposes to conduct any study in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the outcome thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. JATUA)

(a) & (b) The Government had constituted a committee for reviewing the existing Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 and the rules framed thereunder to provide greater specificity to the provisions of existing codes. The Committee has submitted its report to the Government which is available on the website of the Ministry www.mib.nic.in under the heading "Self Regulation Guidelines 2008".

The Government has recently set up a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Secretary (I & B) for holding wider consultation with stakeholders to arrive at a consensus regarding the provisions of the draft content code.

(c) As informed by Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), they have not conducted any study on the adverse effect of Advertising, if any, on Children. However, as informed by them, ASCI after reviewing the International Guidelines on Food Advertisements addressed to children and after consulting the various stakeholders including Consumer leaders and the Food Industry, had come up with Guidelines on the content of Food Advertisements addressed to children.

(d) The details are annexed.

(e) As informed by ASCI, the advertisers are now clearly aware of their responsibilities and approximately 96% compliance has been achieved during the last 2 years with respect of Food Advertisements directed at children.

ANNEXURE AS REFERRED TO IN REPLY OF PART (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 137 FOR ANSWER ON 23.02.2010

ASCI's Guidelines on Advertising of Food & Beverages directed at children under 13 years of age.

Preamble

Children's choice of diet (food and beverages) and level of physical activity, can impact their general health and well being. It can have a positive influence by encouraging a healthy, well balanced diet, sound eating habits and appropriate physical activity. Caution and care therefore should be observed in advertising of Foods & Beverages especially ones containing relatively high Fat, Sugar and Salt.

Guideline

(1) Advertisement should not mislead consumers to believe that consumption of product advertised will result directly in personal changes in intelligence, physical ability or exceptional recognition. Such claims if made in advertisements should be supported with adequate scientific substantiation. All nutritional and health benefit claims in foods & beverage advertisements are required to be substantiated scientifically.

(2) Unless a food product has been nutritionally designed as a meal replacement, it should not be portrayed as such.

- (3) Messages in advertising to children will portray accurately the products, in a way that is in keeping with their ability to understand.
- (4) Advertisements should not show over consumption of Foods & Beverages. It should reflect moderation in consumption and portion sizes appropriate to occasion or situation. Advertising of promotional offers on Food & Beverage products should also not show excessive consumption.
- (5) Advertisements should not undermine the role of parental care and guidance in ensuring proper food choices are made by Children.
- (6) Visual presentation of foods and beverages in advertisements should not mislead the consumers of the material characteristics of the products advertised.