

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:170

ANSWERED ON:09.03.2010

OBSCENITY IN ADVERTISEMENTS

Anuragi Shri Ghansyam ;Hegde Shri Anant Kumar

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

- (a) whether cases of obscenity in the advertisements appearing in the print and the electronic media have been reported;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of such cases reported during each of the last three years and the current year and the action taken thereon;
- (c) the mechanism in place to regulate the content of the advertisements displayed on the print and the electronic media;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to introduce a new code for regulating the contents of the advertisements to prevent its adverse impact on children; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.170 TO BE ANSWERED ON 09/03/2010 REGARDING OBSCENITY IN ADVERTISEMENTS

(a) to (e): Some instances of obscene content both in print and electronic media have come to the notice of the Government. The statements indicating the details of the cases in respect of print and electronic media, reported during the last three years and the current year alongwith the action taken thereon are annexed as Annexure I & II, respectively.

The Government, in pursuance to its policy to uphold the freedom of the press and of maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India and also to inculcate the principles of self regulation among the press has set up the Press Council of India (PCI), an autonomous body under the Press Council Act, 1978. The PCI in furtherance of its object under section 13(2) of the Act has been mandated to build up a code of conduct for newspapers, news agencies and journalists in accordance with high professional standards. Accordingly, the Press Council has formulated 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' to help the journalists to self-regulate their conduct. The norm 17, which is annexed as Annexure – III specifically relates to obscenity and vulgarity.

All advertisements telecast on TV channels, transmitted/retransmitted through the Cable TV network, are required to adhere to the Advertising Code prescribed under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder. Action is taken as per rules whenever any violation of Code is brought to the notice of the Government. This Ministry has constituted an Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) to look into the specific complaints or to take suo motu cognizance against the violation of Programme and Advertising Codes and action is taken as per rules if violation is established. Government has also set up an Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) to monitor the content of private television channels with reference to the violation of Programme and Advertising Codes.

The Government had constituted a committee for reviewing the Programme and Advertising Code (Content Code) prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder, and the committee has submitted its report and made recommendations in the form of draft 'Self-regulation Guidelines for the Broadcasting Sector (2008)' which are available on the Ministry's website <http://mib.gov.in> under the heading "Code and Guidelines". The Government is holding consultations with all stakeholders concerned, to arrive at broad consensus regarding the provisions of the elaborated Content Code. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has recently set up a Task Force including representatives of Broadcasting Associations under the Chairmanship of Secretary (I & B) for holding wider consultation with all the stakeholders to arrive at a consensus in this regard.