

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3927
ANSWERED ON:20.04.2010
FUNCTIONING OF ILLEGAL TV CHANNELS
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether several TV channels including Saudi TV, Islamic TV and other foreign channels have been reported to have been functioning in the country without permission for downlinking and uplinking broadcasting services;
- (b) if so, the details thereof channel-wise and the total revenue losses incurred on account of such illegal TV channels;
- (c) the action taken against such TV channels during each of the last three years, channel-wise; and
- (d) the corrective measures taken by the Government to stop the functioning of such TV channels in the country?

Answer

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

(a) and (b) : Yes, Sir. The Government is in receipt of inputs regarding downlinking and retransmission of unregistered satellite TV channels by cable operators in their network in certain parts of the country. A foreign channel for getting registration under the downlinking guidelines is required to pay a registration fee of Rs.5 lakh for registration for a period of 5 years. In addition an annual fee of Rs.1 lakh is also required to be paid. Further if the company seeking registration of the channel is not a permitted company under the downlinking guidelines then it is also required to pay an initial fees of Rs.5 lakh. Since the number of channels getting illegally downlinked by cable operators is not known, no total figure with regard to the total revenue loss can be given.

(c)& (d): The Authorised Officers under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, which include District Magistrates, Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Commissioners of Police are empowered to take action against the cable operators in case of carriage of unregistered channels. The Ministry has been communicating with the State Governments for setting up of State and District Level Monitoring Committees to ensure compliance of the provisions of the Cable Act and the rules made thereunder. The Government on 7.10.2009 issued an advisory to all authorized Multi System Operators and Cable Operators Associations to discontinue with immediate effect transmission/re-transmission of illegal channels failing which action would be taken. The Ministry also maintains an updated list of permitted/ registered channels on its website for ease of reference by the authorized officers, multi system operators and cable operators. The Government has, from time to time, issued instructions to the State Chief Secretaries for ensuring proper implementation of the provisions of the Cable Act. Last such instructions were issued on 27.1.2010 to the Chief Secretaries of the States in the context of reports of illegal transmission of certain satellite TV channels. It was also requested in the letter that all authorized officers be advised to conduct periodic checks on the basis of list maintained by the Ministry as to whether the channels being carried in their jurisdiction by cable operators are registered or not and take effective action in case of violations. However, since action is taken at the level of authorized officers no such data with regard to action taken has been maintained in the Ministry.