

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:20

ANSWERED ON:22.02.2011

IRREGULARITIES IN C.G. TELECAST

Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Yadav Shri Dharmendra

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

- (a) whether a high level probe panel constituted by the Government to investigate the alleged cases of corruption and irregularities connected with the broadcasting of the XIX Commonwealth Games(CG), 2010 has submitted its report to the Government;
- (b) if so, the details of the major findings of the report;
- (c) the follow-up action taken/being taken thereon;
- (d) Whether the Government has directed the holding up of payment to certain firms including foreign firms due to the alleged involvement in irregularities during the said event; and
- (e) If so, the details of such firms and the reasons therefor along with the total amount to be paid to them and the time by which such payments are likely to be made?

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 LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.20 FOR ANSWER ON 22.02.2011.

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) Major findings of the first report of HLC on Host Broadcasting are enclosed herewith as Annexure. Report of the HLC is also available on the website at www.india.gov.in.

(c) to (e) Ministry has since examined the report and has forwarded its remarks to the Cabinet Secretariat. Following decisions have been taken by Government in this regard:

(i) the Director General, Doordarshan has been reverted to her parent cadre following the expiry of her tenure on 19.2.2011..

(ii) the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has been directed to seek explanations from the then Chief Executive Officer of Prasar Bharati and Director General, Doordarshan on the allegations made against them and recommend an appropriate course of action within two weeks.

(iii) the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has been directed to review the claims made by M/s SIS LIVE, jointly with Prasar Bharati and in consultation with their financial advisers to ensure that there is no over-payment. In the event of any over-payment having been made, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has been directed to take appropriate action for recovery, after seeking due legal advice and

(iv) matter relating to the relationship between the government and the Prasar Bharati and that between the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Prasar Bharati, as also issues regarding the governance structure and the oversight mechanism put in place by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in respect of such events, to be referred to the existing Group of Ministers on Prasar Bharati, which is being directed to expedite its work so that necessary corrective administrative and legislative measures could be put in place at the earliest.

(v) A copy of the report has been referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation through Department of Personnel & Training for further action as deemed appropriate.

ANNEXURE AS REFFERED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF THE LOK SABHA QUESTIONJ NO. 20 FOR 22.2/2011

Chapter 5: Major Findings

5.1 Governance Structure

5.1.1 The Governance structure established by the Ministry of I & B proved unequal to the task. While it enabled the Host Broadcasting Monitoring Committee (HBMC) headed by CEO Prasar Bharati to make recommendations and secure approvals of the Oversight Committee, the latter chaired by Minister of I & B, was unable to prevent abuse of authority or even observance of due process by the former.

5.1.2 Since Prasar Bharati was the Host Broadcaster for Commonwealth Games, Delhi 2010, the progress of discharge of this responsibility became the concern of the Committee of Secretaries (COS) as well as that of Group of Ministers (GOM). Discord within Prasar Bharati was discussed and inability to resolve problems and accelerate decision making was noted. In fact in the 4th meeting of the reconstituted GOM under the chairmanship of Minister of Urban Development held on 20th October, 2009, Secretary I & B informed the GOM that "in respect of engagement of Consultant for Production and Coverage of Commonwealth Games, Delhi 2010, the Host Broadcasting Management Committee of Prasar Bharati was not unanimous in their recommendations to the Government. He stated that two sets of minutes / recommendations had been received as a result of which it was not possible for the Ministry to take a decision in the matter".

5.1.3 After its reconstitution in June, 2009, GOM met seventeen times upto 05th March, 2010 when Prasar Bharati finally entered into an agreement with SIS LIVE. Prasar Bharati was part of the agenda in these meetings without any noticeable results. Meanwhile COS kept nudging CEO Prasar Bharati but he remained undeterred from his objectives of awarding the contract to SIS LIVE and thereafter facilitate its assignment to Zoom Communications. When these objectives were accomplished on 05th March, 2010, the subject went off the agenda of GOM.

5.1.4 Transaction of business in Prasar Bharati has been entrusted to the triumvirate of CEO, Member (Personnel) and Member (Finance). In practice it has met the same fate i.e. delays, dysfunctionality and systemic distrust. The several checks and balances were unable to prevent abuse of authority by the CEO and the Prasar Bharati Board as well as the Government were helpless spectators in this venal episode.

5.2 Role of CEO, Prasar Bharati & DG (DD)

5.2.1 The CEO Prasar Bharati and DG (DD), in concert with some others in these entities, were able to:

impose restrictive and inflexible conditions in the tendering process to discourage competition;

misrepresent and suppress information crucial for informed decision making;

disregard / flout established practices vis a vis Expression of Interest (EOI),

Request for Proposal (RFP) etc. thereby vitiating the selection process to the advantage of SIS LIVE;

extend post award of contract benefits and concessions to SIS LIVE - the selected service provider selected for production and coverage of the Games;

feign ignorance of 'illegal' contract assignment by SIS LIVE to Zoom Communications - an ineligible entity - even though both contracts had been signed on 5th March, 2010 'back to back' and SIS LIVE had announced having done so in a Press Release issued on 8th March, 2010.

5.2.2 Prasar Bharati assumed no role in planning, methodology and management by outsourcing Host Broadcast operations in their entirety and ignored:

quantitative and qualitative deviations in supply of equipment; and

instances of breach of contract including non-supply of key personnel, other staff and deliverables.

5.2.3 Prasar Bharati deliberately delayed decisions to accomplish its pre-meditated objective as fait accompli.

5.2.4 These actions / inactions are strongly suggestive of collusion between CEO Prasar Bharati and Director General (Doordarshan) and the service provider(s), SIS Live / Zoom Communications.