

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:68

ANSWERED ON:22.02.2011

REGULATING MEDIA CONTENT

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware about the depiction of violence, vulgarity, obscenity, stunt scenes etc. through television programmes and advertisements and reality shows on various private and Doordarshan channels as well as the print media;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of complaints received by the Government during each of the last three years and the current year, channels-wise and media-wise;
- (c) the details of action taken/number of advisory, warning and orders issued to the said TV channels for violation of programme and advertising codes prescribed under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and press council Act, channel wise and media-wise;
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to ban such programmes including reality shows being telecast on TV channels; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor alongwith the other corrective measures taken/being taken by the Government to stop such incidents in the electronic and the print media?

Answer

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

(a) Some instances of violence, obscenity and vulgarity etc. shown on private TV channels have been brought to the notice of the Government. With regard to private satellite TV channels, there is no pre-censorship of the Programmes telecast on such channels. However, all such TV channels are required to strictly adhere to the Programme and Advertisement Codes prescribed under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rules framed thereunder. Whenever any violation of these Codes is brought to the notice of the Ministry, appropriate action is taken as per the said Act.

So far as Print media is concerned, the Press in India is free from Government control. In pursuance of its policy to uphold the freedom of the press, the Government does not interfere in its functioning. However, the Press Council of India (PCI) - a statutory autonomous body has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 for maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India and to inculcate principles of self-regulation among the press. Accordingly, PCI, in order to prevail upon the Press to practice self-regulation, have formed norms of journalistic conduct under Section 13(2)(b) of the Press Council Act, 1978. The PCI monitors and takes cognizance, suo-motu or on complaints, of contents in Print Media which prima facie are violative of the ethics of journalistic practice. The complaints of contents in Print Media, which are violative of norms of Journalistic Conduct are adjudicated by PCI under section 14 of the Press Council Act 1978 read with Press Council (Procedure of Inquiry) Regulations 1979.

(b) & (c) A statement showing the action taken against private satellite TV channels and Print Media during last three years is Annexed.

(d) & (e) No, Sir. There is no such proposal. However, all private satellite TV channels are required to strictly adhere to the Programmes and Advertisements Codes stipulated in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. Whenever any violation thereof is noticed, appropriate action as per the said Act is taken.

As regards Print Media, the 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' have been formulated by PCI under Section 13(2)(b) of the Press Council Act, 1978. These norms cover general principles and ethics of journalism as well as guidelines on specific issues such as communal disturbances, terrorism, AIDS, financial journalism, election reporting etc. The PCI's 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' have been evolving over the years and presently, the year 2010 edition is being followed by the Press.