

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1305
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2011
BROADCASTING SERVICES REGULATION BILL
Naranbhai Shri Kachhadia

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

- (a) The present status of the Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill being formulated to regulate broadcasting services like TV channels and FM radio and the time by which it is likely to be implemented;
- (b) Whether the Government proposes to issue any guidelines for controlling the broadcasting of content and frequency by FM radio at present; (
- (c) If so, the details thereof and the time by which these guidelines are likely to issued;
- (d) If not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) Whether the representatives of the News Broadcasters Association, Indian Broadcasting Foundation and the Broadcast Editors Association have expressed their apprehension about the new uplinking and downlinking norms being framed by the Government; and
- (f) If so, the details thereof and the basis for such apprehension from the broadcasters?

Answer

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

(a): The Ministry had formulated a draft Broadcasting Service Regulation Bill in 2007 for ensuring orderly growth of Broadcasting Services and the same was placed on the website of the Ministry inviting comments of stakeholders. There was stiff opposition from the broadcasters and others on the proposed structure of the Broadcast Regulator and on issue of regulation of content. A Task Force was therefore constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on 27th November, 2009 to hold wide ranging consultations with stakeholders to understand their perspective on the need, scope, jurisdiction, organizational structure, powers and functions of an independent Broadcast Regulator and the issues relating to regulation of content and furnish its recommendations to the Government.

Meanwhile , the industry has set up a self regulatory mechanism for content regulation .As part of their self regulatory initiative, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) has set up the Broadcasting Content Complaint Council (BCCC) to regulate the content on general entertainment channels. The News Broadcasters Association (NBA) has formed News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) to consider the content related complaints of news channels. Advertisement Standard Council of India (ASCI) has also developed a Code of conduct for self regulation in advertising and they have set up a Consumer Complaints Cell (CCC) to examine complaints relating to advertisements. At present there is no proposal under the consideration of the Ministry to regulate various broadcasting services by way of establishing a Broadcast Regulator.

(b)to(d): The existing regulatory framework enshrined in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the Rules promulgated thereunder contain adequate provisions to regulate telecast of programmes and advertisements by private satellite television channels. There is at present no need for any separate regulatory mechanism. In so far as FM Radio is concerned, Government has not issued any guidelines for controlling frequency; however, a policy guidelines has been issued by the Government on 25.7.2011 for expansion of FM Radio broadcast through private firms in FM Phase-III, the details of which are available on Ministry's website www.mib.nic.in

(e) & (f): It was reported in several news papers that broadcasters has certain apprehensions with regard to amendments in the Uplinking/Downlinking Guidelines regarding conditions for renewal of permission of TV Channels. Their apprehensions were dispelled in a meeting by the Ministry with broadcasters.