

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2879

ANSWERED ON:11.12.2012

TV CHANNEL PACKAGE

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

- (a) whether the Union Government is aware that the Cable TV Service providers are offering TV channel packages to subscribers at their own will;
- (b) if so, whether the Union Government has received any complaints with regard to harassment of subscribers by the service providers/cable operators in issuing such packages to them;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the guidelines approved by the Union Government in this regard; and
- (d) the steps being taken by the Union Government to protect the interest of subscribers?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI)

(a): TRAI's Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Fourth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2010 dated 21st July, 2010, as amended on 30.4.2012, regulates tariff and pricing for the digital cable TV Systems. As per the said tariff order, it is mandatory for the service providers to offer all channels (pay and free to air) on a-la-carte basis to subscribers. The tariff order further provides that the operators of digital addressable cable TV systems would offer to the consumers a Basic-Service-Tier (BST) comprising of minimum 100 free-to-air (FTA) channels, at a maximum charge of Rs. 100/- (excluding taxes) per subscriber per month. The tariff order also stipulates that it shall be open to the subscriber to choose any combination of free to air channels up to one hundred channels, in lieu of the basic service tier offered by the multi-system operator. If a digital addressable cable TV subscriber subscribes to the pay channels, in a-la-carte or bouquet or a combination of a-la-carte and bouquet, with or without free to air channels, it shall be open to the multi-system operator to specify a minimum monthly subscription, not exceeding one hundred and fifty rupees (exclusive of taxes) per month. It is also provided for in the tariff order that every service provider, in addition to the offering of pay channels on a-la-carte basis can also offer bouquets of channels, in which case, it shall specify the maximum retail price for each such bouquet applicable to its ordinary subscribers.

(b) & (c): A control room with a toll free number was set up in the Ministry in the month of October, 2012 in order to redress the complaints and doubts of consumers with regard to issues relating to Set Top Box availability, pricing, prices of channels, various packages of channels etc during the implementation of digitization of cable TV in four metros of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, which was completed on 31.10.2012. During the period from 15th October, 2012 to 9th November, 2012, the Control Room received more than 5000 calls which were suitably addressed. In addition, the Ministry has an existing mechanism for handling of any grievances of consumers which are appropriately sent to the concerned service providers for immediate redressal.

(d): With a view to protect the interest of subscribers, the TRAI has issued Standards of Quality of Service (Digital Addressable Cable TV Systems) Regulation, 2012 and Consumer Complaint Redressal (Digital Addressable Cable TV Systems) Regulations 2012 on 14.5.2012. The Regulations on the Quality of Service, inter-alia, prescribe the norms for the connection, disconnection, shifting, transfer of services, timelines for redressal of complaints, billing procedure, set-top-box (STB) related issues and technical parameters to be adhered to by the service providers etc. The Consumer's Complaint Redressal regulations provide for establishing a complaint centre, provision of toll-free number and provision of Nodal officers in cases where the consumer complaints are not redressed to the satisfaction of the complainant. It is mandatory for the service providers to comply with these regulations of TRAI.