

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3471
ANSWERED ON:19.03.2013
RATING SYSTEM IN BROADCASTING SECTOR
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to evolve a system for rating of programmes across the broadcasting sector;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there are a lot of problems with the existing system regarding poor coverage in different regions of the country;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (e) whether it is proposed to have an overriding impact on content creation by broadcasters in the new system; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the other benefits that would accrue under the above new system?

Answer

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

(a) to (f): The Standing Committee on Information Technology in its review of Television Rating Point (TRP) system pointed out certain deficiencies in the existing system of generation of TRP, such as inadequate sample size, lack of coverage of Rural areas, North Eastern States and J&K, monopoly of rating agencies etc. Hence the Government requested Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to examine the issue of TRP system in India. TRAI recommended Self-regulation of TRPs. Accordingly, Industry-led body, Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), set up Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) in 2010. Subsequently, a Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of the former Secretary General, Federation of India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, to address issues regarding functioning of BARC, broadening of BARC board, setting up of High Powered Committee to provide guidance in the design and analysis of audience research measurement, increasing sample size, bringing about transparency in selection of rating agency, avoiding cross holding etc. The Committee submitted its report in November 2010. As the recommendations of the Committee were to be acted upon by the IBF, the report was sent to them in January 2011 for necessary action. Ministry has constantly followed up the matter with the IBF asking them to operationalise BARC and put in place a transparent and credible TRP measurement system. IBF has recently informed the Ministry that BARC is likely to start publishing television viewership data by March 2014. Meanwhile a reference has been made to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to recommend comprehensive guidelines/ accreditation mechanism with TRAI as accrediting agency for TRP rating agencies in India. The comprehensive accreditation system, inter-alia should have the following:

- i) Well represented and statistically valid sample size of TV homes giving adequate representation to both urban and rural areas;
- ii) Coverage of all States in the Country;
- iii) Third party audit of the data;
- iv) Transparency in the selection of people meter homes;
- v) Secrecy of people meter homes on the panel;
- vi) Public grievance redressal mechanism.

All these are expected to bring transparency, credibility and accountability in the system.