

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1194  
ANSWERED ON:12.12.2013  
PUBLISHING TELECAST OF BASELESS PROVOCATIVE NEWS REPORTS  
Maadam Shri Vikrambhai Arjanbhai

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of baseless and provocative news/reports published/telecast through the print and the electronic media in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to formulate any policy prescription to contain such menace;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which such policy is likely to be implemented; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor and the other corrective measures taken/likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (e): In pursuance of its policy to uphold the freedom of the press, the Government does not interfere in functioning of the press. However, Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in the country and also to inculcate the principles of self regulation among the press. In furtherance of its objective, the PCI has formulated 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' for adherence by the media while publishing news. The Norm 1 relating to 'Accuracy and Fairness' prescribes that the Press shall eschew publication of inaccurate, baseless, graceless, misleading and distorted material. The PCI has registered 532 complaints on charges of baseless and provocative news reports published in print media since April 1, 2012.

The Press Council of India monitors and takes cognizance, suo motu or on complaints, of contents in print media which prima facie, are violative of Norms of Journalistic Conduct. The council may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist.

So far as private satellite TV channels are concerned, there is no provision for pre-censorship of the content telecast on such channels. However, all programmes and advertisements telecast on TV channels, transmitted/retransmitted through the cable TV networks, are required to adhere to the Programme Code and Advertising Code prescribed under Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder. Action is taken against the defaulting channels by the Government whenever any violation of the aforementioned codes is brought to the notice of the Government regarding any specific programme.

Further, as part of self-regulating Complaints Redressal mechanism, News Broadcasters Association (NBA) - a representative body of news and current affairs channels - has set up News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) to consider complaints against or in respect of broadcasters in so far as these relate to the content of any broadcast. The NBSA is headed by a retired Chief Justice of India. Similarly, Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), which is a representative body of non-news & current affairs TV channels, has set up Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) to examine the complaints about television programmes. The BCCC is headed by a retired Chief Justice of Delhi High Court. The complaints can be sent directly to BCCC and NBSA about the television programmes for appropriate action by them.