

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:776

ANSWERED ON:27.02.2015

VULGARITY IN TELEVISION PROGRAMMES . KUNWAR HARIBANSH SINGH

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the rising contents of obscenity, vulgarity and nudity in the television programmes in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years along with the names of channels against which action has been taken for violating rules in this regard;
- (c) whether there is no self regulation to check vulgarity and indecent programmes on TV channels and if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to amend Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to monitor the content of the programmes being telecast on Doordarshan and private channels?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
(COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.))

(a) & (b): No such study has been brought to the notice of the Ministry. As per existing regulating framework, all programmes and advertisements telecast on TV channels and transmitted/retransmitted through the Cable TV network are required to adhere to the Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rules framed thereunder. Action is taken as per rules suo-motu and whenever violation of Codes is brought to the notice of the Ministry. These codes contain a whole range of parameters to regulate programmes and advertisements including content of obscenity vulgarity and nudity in TV programmes. Details of action taken on violation of Programme and Advertisement code by Private TV channels for telecast of obscene visuals in the last three years and the current year is enclosed at Annexure.

(c): Government has encouraged self-regulation in electronic media by the Industry. News Broadcasters Association (NBA), which represents Private television news and current affairs broadcasters, as part of its self-regulation mechanism, has formulated a Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards covering a wide range of principles to self-regulate news broadcasting. NBA has also formulated News Broadcasting Standards Regulations. They have set up a Two-Tier structure to deal with content related complaints- at Tier I, by the individual broadcasters and at Tier II, by News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA). The Authority consists of a Chairperson who is a retired Judge of the Supreme Court and eight other members. Members of the Authority comprise of 4 (four) eminent editors employed with broadcaster and 4 (four) persons having special knowledge and/or practical experience in the field of law, education, medicine, science, literature, public administration, consumer affairs, environment, human psychology and/or culture.

Besides, Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), which is a self-regulatory body of non-News and entertainment channels, has set up a mechanism for self-regulation. As part of this, IBF has laid down Content Code & Certification Rules 2011 covering an entire gamut of content-related principles and criterion for television broadcast. As part of this mechanism, a two-Tier complaints redressal system has been set up. At the Tier-I level, each Broadcaster has set up a Standard and Practices (S&P) Department with a Content Auditor to deal with the complaints received for content aired on its channels. At the Tier II, a Broadcast Content Complaints Council (BCCC) has been set up. The BCCC has 13 Members headed by a retired Judge of the Supreme Court or High Court as Chairperson and 12 other Members, viz. 4 eminent persons, 4 members from any National Level Statutory Commissions and 4 Broadcast members.

Also, Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), established in 1985, has set up Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) to consider complaints in respect of advertisements. The CCC currently has 28 members; 12 are from within the industry and 16 are from the civil society like well known doctors, lawyers, journalists, academicians, consumer activists etc.

(d): Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 falls within the purview of Ministry of Women and Child Development. Amendments to the Act were introduced by the concerned Ministry in Rajya Sabha that referred the Bill to Parliamentary Standing Committee.

Parliamentary Standing Committee made certain observations on the proposed amendments on Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 regarding overlapping of this Act with many other laws. Subsequently, comments of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on the proposal of Ministry of Women and Child Development in view of observations of Parliamentary Standing Committee have been given.

(e): Ministry has constituted an Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) to look into the violations suo-motu or whenever violation of the Programme and Advertising Codes is brought to the notice of this Ministry in respect of private satellite TV channels. IMC has representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Defence, External Affairs, Law, Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare, Consumer Affairs and a representative from the industry in Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI). IMC meets periodically and recommends action in respect of violations.

Ministry has also set up a state-of-art Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) to monitor and record the content telecast on Private satellite television channels on a 24x7 basis. Presently it monitors 600 TV channels.

Also, District level and State level Monitoring Committee have also been constituted to regulate content telecast on cable TV channels.

In so far as Doordarshan Channels are concerned, Doordarshan has its own Broadcasting Code and Social Objectives and advertisement Code for production and telecast of programmes to ensure that no programmes containing obscenity, vulgarity and nudity go on air.