

an>

Title : The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs made the statements regarding the factual position on carrying of Arab TV Channels and the status of implementation of recommendations contained in 24th Report of Standing Committee on Information Technology on 'Functioning of Registrar of Newspaper for India (RNI)' pertaining to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, in order to strengthen the mechanism of regulation over the content of television channels, which are being transmitted/re-transmitted through cable networks / DTH in India, for public viewing, the Government has notified Downlinking Guidelines on 11th November 2005.

All private TV channels, which are beamed into India, and are being transmitted/ re-transmitted through cable networks / DTH in India, for public viewing, have to get themselves registered under the said Guidelines. To facilitate smooth implementation, six months time (upto 10th May 2006) was provided to all TV channels to comply with the provisions of the Downlinking Guidelines and get themselves registered.

Further, vide notification dated 11th May 2006, the Government allowed the channels which were uplinked from abroad and had made an application for registration to the Central Government upto 11th May 2006, for a period of six months i.e. upto November 2006 or till such registration has been granted or refused.

The private TV channels, which were uplinking from India, in accordance with the permission for uplinking granted before 2nd December 2005, were treated as "registered" television channels under the Downlinking Guidelines.

It has been brought to the notice of Ministry that some small section of media has reported that India has "banned" Arab TV channels under pressure from Israel. The Government of India denies this vehemently as it is contrary to facts. No channel in particular has been "banned" recently by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. This is a malicious and baseless accusation against the Government by interested quarters.

* Placed in Library, See No. LT 4827/06.

UPA Government reiterates that the Arab TV channels like Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabia, Q TV have not yet applied to be downlinked in India till date. Hence they cannot be transmitted / re-transmitted through cable networks / DTH in India, for public viewing. However, they are still free to apply afresh for registration under the Downlinking Guideline, if they so desire and they will have similar opportunities like others.

The policy guidelines for downlinking issued on 11th November 2005, the list of 65 channels uplinked from abroad, who had applied upto 10th May 2006 and permitted to continue beaming *vide* notification issued on 11th May 2006 and other related documents are available on the Ministry's website: www.mib.nic.in.

A press release clarifying the above status has been issued on 7.8.2006 by the Ministry on which reports have been carried by newspapers both within and outside the country. The Ministry of External Affairs has also sent a detailed fax message, dated 7.8.2006 to all missions in the Gulf and WANA regions to rebut the malicious and false information carried by the paper.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, I am making this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Twentieth-Fourth Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology (14th Lok Sabha) 2005-06 pertaining to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in pursuance of direction 73 A of the hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha issued *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin -- Part II, dated September 01, 2004.

The Twenth-Fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (14th Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha on 20.12.2005. The Report relates to "Functioning of the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI)".

In the Twenth-Fourth Report, the Committee made six recommendations in all. The Action Taken Notes on these recommendations/observations have been furnished to the Committee on 28.4. 2006.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations/observations made by the Committee is indicated in the Annexure to my statement, which is laid on the Table of the House.

I would request that this may be considered as read.

Placed in Library, See No. LT 4828/06.

-
-
-