GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 714
(TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.02.2021)

MANIPULATION OF TV RATING.

714. SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that certain media channels have tried to manipulate the system of Television ratings through corrupt means;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has ordered any study into the issue of Television channels manipulating Television Rating Points (TRP) using corrupt means;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the preventive measures being planned by Government to avoid such things from happening in the future?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE; MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) and (b) : The news reports published since October, 2020 expressed some concerns relating to Television Rating Points. The Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) had responded stating that apart from action of its Disciplinary Council to maintain panel sanctity, BARC has actively pursued action against those involved in tampering the samples and has filed 11 FIRs through its vendor across many States.

BARC stated that in its commitment to produce robust and credible data of TV viewership in India, its system was able to detect anomalous viewership behaviour and the cases filed are also due to the strong data security and vigilance system that BARC has set up over a period of time.

(c) and (d) : In order to study the concerns related to Television Rating Points and address them in the light of fresh recommendations of TRAI, technological advancements / interventions to address the system, a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Chief Executive Officer, Prasar Bharati with independent members from IIT, C-DOT and IIM. The Committee was tasked, inter alia, to study any issues related or incidental to the subject and make recommendations on way forward for a robust, transparent and accountable rating system in India.

(e) : The existing guidelines has provisions like methodology for audience measurement, panel selection, viewing platform secrecy and privacy, data analysis, transparency and complaint redressal mechanism etc. which are required for a robust, transparent and accountable rating system in India. Notwithstanding the existing provisions in the guidelines and the processes put in place by BARC, based on the Report of the Committee headed by CEO, Prasar Bharati along with recommendations of TRAI, the matter could be appropriately considered for further interventions, if required.

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