

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2235
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08/03/2018**

TELECAST OF OBJECTIONABLE CONTENTS

2235. DR. KRISHAN PRATAP:

Will the Minister of **INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has received a large number of complaints from viewers/audiences regarding so-called objectionable contents being telecast/broadcast on several TV channels and radio stations;
- (b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken for safeguarding the interests and fundamental rights of viewers in the country; and
- (c) whether the Government proposes to set up a statutory mechanism for the redressal of complaints against the contents of private TV channels and radio stations; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Complaints are received directly and also through the public grievance portal i.e. <http://pgportal.gov.in> relating to the content telecast on private TV channels. As per existing regulatory framework, private satellite TV channels are required to adhere to the Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 framed thereunder which contain a gamut of criteria to be followed while carrying programmes and advertisements in such TV channels. FM Radio Channels are required to comply with the terms & conditions of the Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA) which is executed by them with the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting at the time of granting permission to run FM radio channels. Clause 7.6 of the GOPA provides that the permission holder shall ensure that no content, messages, advertisement or communication, transmitted in its Broadcast Channel is objectionable, obscene, unauthorized or inconsistent with the laws of India.

Ministry has also constituted a composite Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) comprising officers from Ministries of Home Affairs, Defence, External Affairs, Law & Justice, Women & Child Development, Health & Family Welfare, Consumer Affairs and a representative from Advertising Standards Council of India, to take cognizance suo moto or to look into specific complaints regarding content on private TV channels on any platform including FM Radio channels. As and when there is a prima facie case of

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violation by private satellite TV channels and private FM channels regarding content aired by them, the matter is placed before the IMC for its consideration/recommendations. Thus, IMC functions in a recommendatory capacity. The final decision is taken on the basis of the recommendations of IMC by the Ministry.

As part of self-regulation, the following are the self regulating bodies of broadcasting industry:

(i) News Broadcasters Association (NBA)- a representative body of news and current affairs TV channels has set up News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) to consider complaints against or in respect of broadcasters relating to content of any news and currents affairs telecast on TV channels.

(ii) 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, and

(iii) Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), a self regulatory body of advertising industry has set up Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) to consider complaints in respect of advertisements.

The above mechanism has also been acknowledged by the Supreme Court of India in its order dated 12.01.2017 in the matter of WP(C) No.387 of 2000 – Common Cause vs UOI & Ors.
