

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1969
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.11.2019

FILING OF CASES AGAINST MEDIA

1969. SHRI JAYADEV GALLA:

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

- (a) whether it has come to the notice of the Ministry about the issue of G.O. issued by the Government of Andhra Pradesh which grants power to the respective Secretaries of Government departments to file cases against TV broadcast media, print media and online media for any reportage against the Government;
- (b) if so, whether the Ministry has examined the said G.O.;
- (c) if so, whether this tantamounts to violation of freedom of speech and expression of the media; and
- (d) if so, the efforts taken by the Ministry to communicate with the Government of Andhra Pradesh to withdraw this controversial G.O.?

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): The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that vide order G.O. Rt. No.938 dated 20.02.2007 it permitted the Special Commissioner, Information and Public Relation to lodge complaints and file defamation cases against the Publisher and Editors Publishing/telecasting items which are false, baseless and defamatory in nature and to initiate legal action.

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh vide order G.O. RT No.2430 dated 30.10.2019 has further accorded permission empowering the Secretaries of respective Departments to issue rejoinders, file complaints and lodge appropriate cases in the above matter.

(b) to (d): The Press council of India set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 has taken *suo motu* cognizance in the matter and has issued Notice on 01.11.2019 to the Government of Andhra Pradesh in this matter.
