

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 729
(TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.02.2021)**

TV PROGRAMME RATING SYSTEM.

729. SHRI BHAGIRATH CHOUDHARY :

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH :

SHRI BHAGWANT MANN :

PROF. SAUGATA RAY :

MS. PRATIMA BHOUMIK :

SHRI MANISH TEWARI :

ADV. ADOOR PRAKASH :

SHRI RAJA AMARESHWARA NAIK :

SHRI NISITH PRAMANIK :

SHRI KOTHA PRABHAKAR REDDY :

SHRI PRATHAP SIMHA :

SHRI PRADEEP KUMAR SINGH :

SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA:

DR. JAYANTA KUMAR ROY:

SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH :

DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR :

SHRI PARBATBHAI SAVABHAI PATEL :

SHRI SUDHAKAR TUKARAM SHRANGARE :

SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR :

SHRI SHIVAKUMAR C. UDASI :

SHRI RAVNEET SINGH BITTU :

SHRI GNANATHIRVIAM S. :

SHRI BHOLA SINGH :

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO :

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

(a) whether concerns have been raised relating to neutrality and reliability of the existing audience TV Rating Programme System and if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(b) whether the Government has received any complaints about the manipulation of TRP from 2015 onwards and if so, the details thereof and action taken thereon;

(c) whether the Government has constituted a committee to review the guidelines for Television Rating Agencies including Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) in India and if so, the details thereof including the findings of the Committee;

(d) the steps being taken by the Government for putting in a robust, transparent and accountable rating system in India;

(e) whether the Government has received complaints against the OTT platforms with regard to their programmes and if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken thereon; and

(f) further measures being taken by the Government to review the guidelines for OTT platforms?

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) & (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 the Disciplinary Council's action 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. The data base on complaints is not centrally maintained. However, the issues pertaining to BARC are normally forwarded to BARC for appropriate action. In addition to the filing of FIRs, with a view to prevent instances of panel tempering and manipulation of audience measurement system, BARC regularly undertakes structural, regulatory and procedural changes as necessary to ensure that the viewership data so captured by BARC and its consequent reporting is as accurate and transparent as possible. Besides, a dedicated complaint redressal mechanism of the rating agency is also provided for in the “Guidelines for Television Rating Agencies in India” notified by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on 16th January, 2014.

Further, in order to address the issues in the light of fresh recommendations of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and the 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.

(c): The above-said committee under the Chairmanship of Chief Executive Officer, Prasar Bharati has been constituted to review the guidelines for Television Rating Agencies including Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) in India and to make recommendations on way forward for a robust, transparent and accountable rating system in India. The Committee has made recommendations on measurement methodology, the structural changes in the composition of the rating agencies and audits, etc. The recommendations of the Committee address various issues referred to them including TRAI recommendations.

(d): The existing guidelines have provisions like methodology for audience measurement, panel selection, viewing platform secrecy and privacy, data analysis, transparency and complaint redressal mechanism etc. which are essential for a robust, transparent and accountable rating system in India. Notwithstanding, based on the Report of the Committee headed by CEO, Prasar Bharati along with recommendations of TRAI, the present guidelines are being analysed / evaluated vis-à-vis shortcomings, if any. Any modifications may involve a thorough and elaborate review of the paradigm.

(e) & (f): The Central Government vide its notification dated 09.11.2020 has amended the Allocation of Business Rules, 1961, relating to Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and the following items have been inserted in the work allocation of this Ministry: -

“VA. DIGITAL/ONLINE MEDIA

22A. Films and Audio- Visual Programme made available by online content providers.

22B. News and Current Affairs content on online platforms.”

The Government is receiving complaints regarding objectionable objects on programmes streamed on Over the Top (OTT) platforms.
