

The Election Commission has directed that District level committees may be constituted in each district as soon as election is announced, to do vigorous scrutiny of all newspapers published or having circulation in the district in order to locate political advertisement in the garb of news coverage appearing during election period. District electoral Officers (DEOs) have been directed to closely monitor advertisements in print media in any form including surrogate advertising in the form of news and to serve notices to candidate/political parties, so that the expenses incurred thereon are duly reflected in the account of the candidate/party concerned.

The District Committee should also keep watch on the election news, features, etc. on the electronic media in the district and in case of disproportionate coverage to the speech/activities of a candidate on television/radio channels which is likely to yield electoral benefit to a particular candidate, the candidate would be served notices to explain as to why the coverage should not be treated as advertisement. The Chief Electoral Officers have been instructed to strengthen the Committee constituted for previewing, scrutinizing and verifying all the advertisements by individual contesting candidates or political parties so as to also scrutinize the news reports in electronic media, which bear the character of political advertisement.

Further, the Election Commission has recently issued instructions to monitor election expenditure during General Elections to Bihar Legislative Assembly and Bye-elections to Lok Sabha seat in Bihar & Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly.

Change of frequency in FM Gold

3623. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the All India Radio has suspended its plan to shift its popular FM Gold channel from its original frequency of 106.4 MHZ to the less known 100.1 MHZ frequency;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that due to many players in the field, AIR's FM operation has been affected because the interference in many areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (DR. S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) As informed by Prasar Bharati, the change of the frequency of AIR FM Gold channel has been deferred for the present subject to wider consultation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As informed by Prasar Bharati, the frequency of FM Gold channel 106.4 MHz was allocated to AIR at the time when AIR was the only broadcaster in the country but WP&C, Ministry of Communication has advised AIR to change the FM Gold frequency from 106.4 MHz to the allocated frequency band for AIR (100.0 MHz to 103.7 MHz). After allocating frequency (106.4MHz) to private broadcasters at Karnal and Hissar, in frequency band of 103.8 MHz to 108.0 MHz, the coverage area of AIR FM Gold Delhi on 106.4 MHz has shrunk due to co-channel interference.

Piracy of films

3624. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Core Group has been constituted to suggest measures to combat piracy of films;

(b) what actions on the recommendations of this Group have been taken to curb piracy;

(c) the number of Special Cells set up for enforcement of copyright laws; and

(d) Government's efforts to raise public awareness on respecting people's intellectual property rights?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (DR. S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Committee was constituted to recommend measures to combat film, video, cable and music piracy. Some of the major recommendations of the Committee include carrying out effective and all encompassing multi-media campaign involving all the relevant stakeholders, upscaling of the level of sensitization of the official machinery mandated to