

Government to look into cases of violations of Programme and Advertising Codes laid down in the Cable Television Networks(Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rules framed thereunder, has been re-constituted on 11.11.2011 to include Joint Secretary of the Department of Consumer Affairs in view of the provisions of the Advertising Code having a bearing on issues concerning consumers.

(c) to (e) Rule 7 (5) of the said Advertising Code provides that no advertisement shall contain references which are likely to lead the public to infer that the product advertised or any of its ingredients has some special or miraculous or super-natural property or quality, which is difficult of being proved. The Ministry also issued an Advisory to all the Channels on 13.5.2010 to follow in letter and spirit the provisions of the said Rule 7 (5). Recently, some instances were brought to the notice of the Ministry that some TV channels were showing advertisements of products purportedly having special or miraculous or supernatural properties. The matter was referred to the Advertising Standards Council(ASCI), the private self-regulating body of advertising industry. ASCI informed that the complaints in cases of advertisements, namely, Divyarishi's Kuber Kunji, Badha Mukti Yantra, Shani Shubh Yantra, Sai Darshan Pendant and Maha Dhan Laxmi Yantra, have been upheld by their Consumer Complaints Council (CCC). Accordingly, the Ministry has advised the Indian Broadcasting Foundation and the News Broadcasters Association that TV channels may be advised by them not to carry these advertisements as also similar advertisements which are not in accordance with Rule 7(5) of the Advertising Code.

**Legislation for regulating publications
and TV channels**

2079. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the recent comments of the current Chairman of the Press Council of India regarding regulation of the contents of newspapers and TV channels and objection raised by the editors and proprietors of various publications and TV channels thereon;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in the matter;

(c) whether Government proposes to introduce fresh legislation for regulating the contents of publications and TV channels and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether it is proposed to bring the electronic media within the ambit of the Press Council of India which currently has no jurisdiction over the electronic media?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a), (b) and (d) The Chairman, Press Council of India (PCI) has written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister raising the issue of need to strike a balance between the freedom of media under Article 19 of the Constitution to perform its functions properly and for it to act with sense of responsibility. The Chairman has also proposed to bring electronic media under the jurisdiction of PCI by way of amendment of the Press Council Act, 1978. Besides, he has also suggested to amend the Act for vesting the PCI with more powers, such as power to impose fine, authority to stop Government advertisements, order suspension/cancellation of registration of newspapers and accreditation of the editor or journalist.

However, PCI, subsequently in its meeting held on 17.11.2011 has decided to hold further debate on the proposal of Chairman, PCI.

(c) At present, there is no proposal to introduce fresh legislation for regulating the contents of publications and TV channels. As per the existing mechanism, Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 for maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India and to inculcate principles of self-regulation among the press. Accordingly, PCI, in order to prevail upon the Press to practice self-regulation, have formed Norms of Journalistic Conduct under section 13(2)(b) of the Press Council Act, 1978 which cover the principles and ethics of journalism. The complaints of contents in print media, which are in violation of 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' are received and adjudicated by PCI under section 14 of the Press Council Act, 1978. The Council can warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist, as the case may be.

Regarding electronic media, the telecast of programmes by private satellite TV channels is regulated by Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules framed thereunder and all such programmes are to be strictly as per the programme code prescribed in the Act. Whenever any violation takes place, action is taken as per the said Act.