

Regulation of media

2383. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is proposed to regulate the media;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether this proposal has been slammed by the jurists in the country;
- (d) if, so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether some prominent personalities have remarked that this proposal would go against the functioning of our democratic system;
- (f) whether it is proposed to evolve a via-media solution to address this issue; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) to (e) In pursuance of its policy to uphold the freedom of press, the Government does not interfere in functioning of the media.

A draft Broadcasting Service Regulation bill was formulated in the year 2007 for ensuring orderly growth of broadcasting services. There was stiff opposition from the broadcasters and others against the proposed structure of the Broadcast Regulator and the issue of regulation of content.

(f) and (g) The existing regulatory framework enshrined in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the Rules promulgated thereunder contain adequate provisions to regulate telecast of programmes and advertisements by private satellite television channels. The Ministry has constituted a Composite Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) to take cognizance *suo motu* or look into specific complaints regarding violation of the Rules. Meanwhile, the industry has also set up a self regulatory mechanism for content regulation. As part of their self regulatory initiative, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) has set up the Broadcasting Content Complaint Council (BCCC) to regulate the content on general entertainment channels. The BCCC is a 13 member body consisting of a Chairperson being a retired judge of Supreme Court or High Court and 12 other members.

Similarly, the News Broadcasters Association (NBA) has also formed News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) to consider the content related complaints of news channels. Advertisement Standards Council of India (ASCI) has also developed a Code of conduct for self regulation in advertising and they have set up a Consumer Complaint Cell (CCC) to examine complaints relating to advertisements.

So far as print media is concerned, Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in the country and also to inculcate the principles of self regulation among the press.

Inquiry into corruption

2384. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Central Vigilance Commission has asked the Ministry last year to inquire into a specific allegation of corruption and submit a report to it;
- (b) if so, action taken by the Ministry in this regard;
- (c) whether an internal inquiry was conducted by the Prasar Bharati;
- (d) if so, the details of the inquiry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) Yes, Sir. During 2011, Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has asked the Ministry to inquire into the specific allegation of corruption on seven (07) complaints relating to Prasar Bharati and submit report to them, details of which are given in Statement (*See below*).

(b) and (c) All the complaints mentioned above were referred to Prasar Bharati for investigation and submission of report to the Ministry. Regarding complaint at para (i) in the Annexure, the report earlier submitted by Prasar Bharati was examined and further clarifications were sought from them which has now been received. In addition, recently Prasar Bharati has also been requested to submit their report with the approval of present CEO, Prasar Bharati, which is awaited. Reports are also awaited from Prasar Bharati in respect of complaints mentioned at para (ii), (v) and (vi) in the Annexure. However, reports in respect of complaint mentioned at para (iii), (iv) and (vii) in the Annexure have since been received.