

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI): (a) and (b) The Cable TV digitization was completed in 3 out of the planned 4 metros of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata by the mandated time line of 31st October, 2012. In Chennai the matter is *sub-judice* in the High Court of Madras. A total of 81.07 lakh Set Top Boxes were installed as on 4.12.2012 in four metro cities, registering an achievement of 98% in the Cable TV sector. Taking into consideration the total number of Direct-to-Home subscribers (DTH) the percentage of digitization goes to 99%.

(c) to (f) At present, no hurdles are anticipated in the implementation of DAS in the second Phase where 38 cities having more than 1 million population will undergo digital switch over by 31st March, 2013. The Ministry has been constantly in contact with the Multi-system Operators to assess and monitor the availability and seeding of STBs on a regular basis. The cost of the implementation of DAS is to be borne by the industry. In the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recommendations on Foreign Investment Limits for Broadcasting Sector dated 30th June, 2010, it has been mentioned that the estimated fund requirement for achieving DAS with digitalization and addressability provisions at all India level is to the order of Rs. 20000-50000 crores.

Sting operation by media people

†2549. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware that the practice of blackmailing the officers and politicians by conducting sting operation is being carried out on a very large scale by the private channels and media people;

(b) whether Government has any plan to constitute any committee for its investigation and to fix the responsibility of print media and communication media on the suggestion of the committee;

(c) whether the people of print media try to defame the public life through paid news on a large scale; and

(d) the efforts being made by Government to check this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI): (a) The Ministry is not aware of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

large scale blackmailing of officers and politicians by private channels through sting operations. However, there have been reports appeared recently in media regarding alleged extortion bid by journalists of a TV news channel through a sting operation against a major steel company.

(b) There is no proposal, at present to constitute any committee for investigation. However, the Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body to improve and maintain the standards of newspaper and news agencies, has laid down "Guidelines on Sting Operations" under its 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct', a copy of which is given in the Statement-I (*See* below). The Council has also held that sting operation by the media should only be subject to self-regulation following the principles and methodology. Also, the News Broadcasters Association (NBA) in their Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards has adopted certain guidelines for conducting "sting operation" by their member channels. A copy of the Guidelines of NBA for conducting Sting Operations is given in the Statement-II.

(c) The Press Council of India (PCI)'s Report on Paid News mentions that some sections of media, on receiving monetary considerations publish 'news' that not merely praise particular candidates but also criticize their political opponents.

(d) The Election Commission has initiated measures to check incidents of election time paid news. The Commission has issued instructions to Chief Electoral Officers of all the States for constituting the District level and State level Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMC) for scrutiny of paid news. These Committees have been instructed to do vigorous scrutiny of electronic media, print media and other modes of mass communication in order to locate political advertisement in the garb of news coverage appearing during the election period. In addition, the Commission has also constituted a Committee at the Commission level to examine references from State level MCMCs and to support policy formulation on issues related to Paid News and those related to usage of electronic and print media for campaigning by parties and candidates.

Statement-I

PCIs Norms of Journalistic Conduct

Guidelines on Sting Operations

- (i) A newspaper proposing to report a sting operation shall obtain a certificate from the person who recorded or produced the same certifying that the operation is genuine and *bonafide*.

- (ii) There must be concurrent record in writing of the various stages of the sting operation.
- (iii) Decision to report the sting operation should be taken by the editor after satisfying himself of the public interest of the matter and ensuring that report complies with all legal requirements.
- (iv) Sting operation published in print media should be scheduled with an awareness of the likely reader in mind. Great care and sensitivity should be exercised to avoid shocking or offending the reader.

Statement-II

*Guidelines of News Broadcasting Association (NBA) for
conducting sting operation*

In furtherance of the principles of self-regulation as contained in NBA's Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards and Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage, a member news channel may conduct a "sting operation", but only in conformity, with the following guidelines:—

- 1. A sting operation may be conducted only if warranted in public interest;
- 2. A sting operation should be conducted only for exposing a wrong-doing;
- 3. A sting operation should not be used for gratuitously prying into peoples' private lives;
- 4. A sting operation may be resorted to only if there is no other effective overt means of collecting or recording the same information or news;
- 5. In conducting a sting operation, a news channel shall not indulge in inducing a person to commit a wrongful act not otherwise contemplated by the person;
- 6. Resort shall not be had to sleaze or sex or any illegal act as a means for carrying-out a sting operation;
- 7. The entire recordings of a sting operation, including edited and un-edited, audio and video footage, must be preserved, as they are for a period of 90 days or for such other period as may be necessary in a given case;
- 8. Recordings of a sting operation, including edited and un-edited, audio and

video footage, shall not be tampered, manipulated, interposed, altered, distorted, morphed or otherwise doctored in any manner that may change the context, purport or meaning thereof;

9. There must be concurrent and contemporaneous recording in writing of the various stages of progress of a sting operation by the person in-charge of it; and such written record shall also be preserved for a period of 90 days or for such other period as may be necessary in a given case;
10. A sting operation must not offend against the provisions of Section 5 of The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rule 6 of The Cable Television Networks Rules 1994 relating to "Programme Code" or any other law in force for the time being, including Section 24 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988;
11. A sting operation shall be telecast only if, and when there is ample evidence to *prima facie* demonstrate the culpability of a wrong-doer;
12. If a sting operation is found false or fabricated, all persons concerned with conducting the sting operation could be liable for punishment in accordance with the law; and
13. No sting operation shall be conducted except with the prior approval and under the supervision of the head of the editorial team of a news channel, who shall also, along with other person concerned, be responsible for all consequences. The Managing Director and/or the Chief Executive Officer of the broadcasting company should also be kept fully informed of any sting operation being conducted by a news channel.

Regularisation of casual presenters and announcers

2550. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there are a large number of casual presenters/announcers working in All India Radio for several years, some even for the last eighteen years;