

Legislation to regulate participation in media sector

153. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has suggested the barring of political parties, religious bodies and Government funded entities and affiliates to gain ownership of the media and even surrogate of such entities for entering the broadcasting and television channel distribution sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether demands have been made by various NGOs and TRAI for any legislation to regulate the participation of such entities in media sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and action taken/being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (COL. RAJYAVARDHAN SINGH RATHORE): (a) to (d) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in its recommendations on 12.11.2008 'Issues relating to entry of certain entities into broadcasting and distribution activities' had, *inter-alia*, recommended that State Governments and urban and local bodies, Panchayati Raj bodies, political and religious bodies should not be allowed to enter into broadcasting activities, including distribution of TV channels. It further recommended that the aspirations of the State Governments, as regards broadcasting, can be adequately met by Prasar Bharati through its existing regional framework. In continuation of these recommendations, TRAI again on 20.12.2012 recommended that Central/State Ministries and Departments, Central/State Government owned companies, Central/State Government undertakings, Joint Ventures of State/Central Government and Central/State Governments funded entities should not be allowed to enter into the business of broadcasting and or distribution of TV channels. Detailed recommendations are available on the website of TRAI at www.trai.gov.in.

Policy making is a dynamic process which may be reviewed from time to time.

Status of Kisan Channel

154. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2230 given on 17 March, 2015 in the Rajya Sabha and state the present status of the Kisan Channel as announced in the Union Budget 2014-15?