

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3189  
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 09/08/2024**

**Regulation for Online Legal Services**

3189. Shri Anto Antony:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of the ban issued by Bar Council of India (BCI) on lawyers advertising and soliciting work through online platforms;
- (b) whether any change has been made in the ban, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the legal basis for BCI's authority to impose such a ban on lawyer advertising through online platforms;
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government regarding this issue; and
- (e) whether the Government intends to implement specific guidelines or regulations to oversee online platforms offering legal services, if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE  
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN  
THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS**

**(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)**

(a) The Bar Council of India (BCI) is mandated to lay down the rules pertaining to standards of conduct and professional etiquette to be maintained by advocates in court, with clients and towards fellow advocates. The BCI has informed that advertising or soliciting work directly or indirectly, by the advocates are prohibited under Rule 36 of BCI Rules, 1975. This prohibition remains intact, with the BCI's recent directives issued *vide* press release dated 08.07.2024 in the light of judgment pronounced by Hon'ble Madras High Court in WP Nos. 31281 and 31428 of 2019, reaffirming its commitment to uphold them.

(b) As per its recent press release dated 08.07.2024, the BCI outlined its directives to enforce disciplinary actions against advocates violating the prohibition which include instructing all State Bar Councils to cease and desist notice(s) to online platforms.

(c) The Bar Council of India's authority to impose the ban on lawyer advertising and solicitation through online platforms flows from Rule 36 of the Bar Council of India Rules, 1975 which reads as under:

"An advocate shall not solicit work or advertise, either directly or indirectly, whether by circulars, advertisements, touts, personal communications, interviews not warranted by personal relations, furnishing or inspiring newspaper comments or producing his photographs to be published in connection with cases which he has been engaged or concerned."

This rule is designed to maintain the professional decorum and ethical standards of the legal profession. It prohibits any form of advertisement or solicitation of work, ensuring that the legal profession remains a service-oriented practice rather than a commercial enterprise.

(d) and (e): The matter falls in the domain of BCI and it has been informed that proactive steps have been taken to enforce the ban on lawyer for advertising and soliciting through online platforms by issuing directives to cease and desist notices. The BCI monitors compliance of these directives in coordination with the State Bar Councils to ensure strict adherence. The BCI under the administration of the Government continues to focus on enforcement of existing rules and addressing violations through its directives. Any need for new regulations or guidelines would be based on the evolving situation and the effectiveness of current enforcement measures.