



**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2024-25)**

EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

(2024-25)

THIRD REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2024/ Agrahayana, 1946 (Saka)

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(2024-25)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 18.12.2024

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 18.12.2024



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2024/ Agrahayana, 1946 (Saka)

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Composition of the Standing Committee on Communications and

Information Technology (2024-25)

Dr. Nishikant Dubey - Chairperson

Lok Sabha

2. Shri C.N. Annadurai
3. Shri Anil Baluni
4. Dr. Rabindra Narayan Behera
5. Shri Anup Sanjay Dhotre
6. Shri Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer
7. Shri Sanjay Haribhau Jadhav
8. Shri S. Supongmeren Jamir
9. Shri Appalanaidu Kalisetti
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14. Dr. M.K. Vishnu Prasad
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18. Shri Arun Kumar Sagar
19. Shri Devesh Shakya
20. Shri Vishnu Datt Sharma
21. Shri Rajesh Verma

Rajya Sabha

22. Shri Saket Gokhale*
23. Smt. Priyanka Chaturvedi
24. Shri Ilaiyaraaja
25. Shri Amar Pal Maurya
26. Dr. Sasmit Patra
27. Shri V. Vijayendra Prasad
28. Shri S. Niranjan Reddy
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31. Shri K.T.S. Tulsi

Secretariat

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Shri Y. M. Kandpal | - Joint Secretary |
| 2. Smt. A. Jyothirmayi | - Director |
| 3. Shri Salil Saroj | - Under Secretary |

Committee constituted w.e.f. 26th September, 2024 vide Para No.833 of Bulletin Part-II dated 26th September, 2024.

* Shri Saket Gokhale has been nominated vide Para No. 853 of Bulletin Part –II dated 03rd October, 2024.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology (2024-25), having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Third Report on Demands for Grants (2024-25) of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

2. The Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology (2024-25) was constituted on 26th September, 2024. One of the functions of the Standing Committee, as laid down in Rule 331E of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, is to consider the Demands for Grants of the Ministry concerned and make a Report on the same to the Houses.

3. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for the year 2024-25 which were laid on the Table of the House on 31 July, 2024. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on 16th October, 2024.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their Sitting held on 16th December, 2024.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the information that the Committee desired in connection with the examination of the Demands for Grants.

6. The Committee would also like to place on record their appreciation for the assistance rendered to them by the officials of the Lok Sabha Secretariat attached to the Committee.

7. For facility of reference and convenience, Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in Part-II of the Report.

New Delhi;

16 December, 2024

25 Agrahayana, 1946 (Saka)

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY,

Chairperson,

Standing Committee on

Communications and Information Technology.

REPORT

PART - I

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) is the focal point regarding policy matters relating to private broadcasting, administering the public broadcasting service (Prasar Bharati), multimedia advertising and publicity of the policies and programmes of the Government of India, film promotion and certification and regulation of print and digital media. The Ministry also handles the task of disseminating information about Government policies, schemes and programmes through different media vehicles. It plays a pivotal role in dissemination and free flow of information via radio, television, films, press and print publications, digital and social media, posters, advertising, and traditional modes of communication such as dance, drama, folk recitals, puppet shows.

2. The functions of the Ministry are divided into three sectors viz., Information, Broadcasting and Films. The role and responsibility of each sector may be seen as under:-

Information Sector	Broadcasting Sector	Films Sector
The Information Sector is responsible for information dissemination and awareness creation of the policies and activities of the Government of India through print, electronic and digital media, framing of policy guidelines for rate fixation of government advertisements on print, electronic, and online platform, and administering the Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023, and the Press Council Act, 1978.	The Broadcasting Sector aids the Ministry in the far-reaching dissemination of Government schemes and initiatives via All India Radio and Doordarshan. The Sector oversees these public broadcasters by administering the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990. It also regulates private TV channels and the network of multi-system operators and local cable operators through the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and policy guidelines issued from time to time. It gives license to DTH/HITS operators for their respective operations. The private FM radio network is regulated by the Ministry through auctioning of FM channels, operationalization of Community Radio Stations in rural and remote areas.	The Films Sector is responsible for production and distribution of documentaries, preservation of films, organization of international film festivals and promotion of good cinema by institution of awards. It administers the Cinematograph Act, 1952, which looks into certification of films for public exhibition and handles other matters relating to film industry, including developmental and promotional activities.

3. As per the OM dated December 30, 2022, issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the activities of four erstwhile film Media units viz. Films Division (FD), Children Film Society of India (CFSI), Directorate of Film Festival (DFF) & National Film Archive of India (NFAI) have been merged entirely with the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). With effect from January 1, 2023, all the activities have been transferred to NFDC. So, currently, there are 7 Media Units/ Attached & Subordinate offices, 5 Autonomous Organisations which include 3 Training Institutes and 2 Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) under the Ministry. The details are as follows:-

Media Units/Attached & Subordinate offices	Autonomous Organizations	Public Sector Undertakings
i. Press Information Bureau (PIB)	i. Press Council of India (PCI)	i. Broadcasting Engineering Consultants India Limited (BECIL)
ii. Central Bureau of Communication(CBC)	ii. Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India)	ii. National Films Development Corporation (NFDC)
iii. Press Registrar General of India (PRGI)	iii. Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)	
iv. Directorate of Publications Division (DPD)	iv. Film and Television Institute of India, Pune (FTII)	
v. New Media Wing (NMW)	v. Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata (SRFTI)	
vi. Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC)		
vii. Central Board of Films Certification (CBFC)		

4. The expenditure of the Ministry is categorized under the following three categories:-

- (A) Establishment Expenditure of the Centre (It includes establishment expenditure of Main Secretariat and attached/sub-ordinate offices of the Ministry);
- (B) Central Sector Schemes [It includes scheme expenditure of four (04) Central Sector Schemes viz. (a) Development Communication & Information Dissemination (DCID), (b) Development, Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content (DCDFC), (c) Supporting Community Radio Movement in India, and (d) Broadcasting Infrastructure & Network Development (BIND)]; and
- (C) Other Central Expenditure, including those on Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and Autonomous Bodies {It includes Grants-in-Aid to five Autonomous Bodies of this Ministry, viz., Film and Television Institute of India (FTII); Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI); Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC); Press Council of India (PCI), Prasar Bharati (PB) and National Film Development Corporation - a central PSU}.

Note: - Contribution to payment of Annual Membership Subscription to Association of Moving Images Archivists (AMIA) & National Film Archive of India (NFAI) – These

activities have now been merged within the Budgetary allocation of National Film Development Corporation from FY 2024-25.

5. The overview of the Ministry with details of aforesaid three categories (three wings/sectors), is as under:-

	FILM SECTOR	INFORMATION SECTOR	BROADCASTING SECTOR (Other than Prasar Bharati)	BROADCASTING SECTOR (Prasar Bharati)
Establishment Expenditure of the Centre	The provision under this Sector covers Establishment Expenditure of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC); ii. Films Division (FD); iii. National Film Archive of India (NFAI); iv. Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF); v. Payment of Annual Membership Subscription to Association of Moving Images (AMIA); and vi. Contribution to membership of International Archive Organizations. 	The provision under this Sector covers Establishment Expenditure of Main Secretariat of the Ministry and Media Units of Information Wing of the Ministry, viz <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Secretariat Expenditure; ii. New Media Wing (NMW); iii. Press Information Bureau (PIB); iv. Central Bureau of Communication; v. Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI); Publications Division (DPD) - Also includes provision for Employment News from FY 2022-23; vi. Contribution to International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). 	The provision under this Sector covers Establishment Expenditure of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC); ii. Private FM Radio Station; and iii. Payment of Annual Membership Subscription to Asia Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD). 	
Central Sector Schemes	Development, Communication and Dissemination of Filmic Content (DCDFC). The Scheme National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM) and Champion services Sector Schemes (CSSS) have also been merged with DCDFC Scheme from FY 2020-21 and 2022-23 respectively.	Under Central Sector Schemes the provisions cover the scheme 'Development Communication and Information Dissemination'.	Under Central Sector Schemes the provisions cover the scheme 'Supporting Community Radio Movement in India'.	The provisions under this Sector cover expenditure on Central Sector Scheme namely, Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND)
Other Central Expenditure, including those on Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and Autonomous Bodies	Other Central Expenditure of Autonomous Bodies under Films Wing covered in these provisions is as under: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Children's Film Society, India (CFSI); ii. Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune; and iii. Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute (SRFTI), Kolkata. 	The provision under this Sector covers Other Central Expenditure of Autonomous Bodies of Information Wing of the Ministry, viz <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC); and (ii) Press Council of India (PCI). 		Salary and Salary related expenditure of Prasar Bharati

6. The Central Government vide notification dated July, 28, 2023 amended **Allocation of Business Rules** and subject relating to online advertisements. Content made available by online content providers/ publishers has been brought under the mandate of Ministry of I&B and revised entry under Allocation of Business Rules of the Ministry is as under:

“ VA. Digital/Online Media

22A. “Films and Audio-Visual programmes/content made available by online content providers/publishers.

22B. News and current affairs content on online platforms”

22C. **Online Advertisements.**”

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is in the process of formulation of Rules for regulation of online advertisements as per Allocation of Business amended on 28.07.2023.

7. The Rules relating to content of digital news and content on OTT platforms which are administered by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting inter-alia provides for a Code of Ethics for the publishers of news and current affairs on digital media and publishers of online curated content (OTT Platforms). The three broad features are:

- i. Code of Ethics for digital news publishers and OTT Platforms
- ii. Three Tier Grievance Redressal Mechanism as under :
 - a. Level-I- Publisher
 - b. Level-II- Self –Regulating Body of publishers, and
 - c. Level-III- Oversight Mechanism of Central Government
- iii. Furnishing of information by publishers to the Government.

II. IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE CONTAINED IN THE FORTY-SIXTH REPORT ON DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2023-24)

8. The Forty-sixth Report of the Committee on the ‘Demands for Grants’ (2023-24) relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was presented to the Lok Sabha/laid in the Rajya Sabha on 21st March, 2023. The Fiftieth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Forty-sixth Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 10th August, 2023. Out of the 17 Recommendations contained in the said Report, 08 Recommendations were accepted by the Government. The Committee had reiterated 02 Recommendations and 07 of the replies were interim in nature. The final Action Taken Statement on the Recommendations contained in the Fiftieth Report was presented to the Lok Sabha/laid in the Rajya Sabha on 11th December, 2023.

III. BUDGET OVERVIEW AND DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2024-25)

9. The expenditure of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) and their attached/sub-ordinate offices and autonomous/grantee bodies, including Prasar Bharati

is covered under Demand No. 61. The following table shows the Budgetary allocations at Budget Estimate and Revised Estimate stage alongwith the Actual Expenditure (hereinafter referred to as BE, RE and AE) for MIB for last four years viz. 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 alongwith the allocations made for the year 2024-25, at BE stage.

(Rs. in Crore)				
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. RE
2020-21	4375.21	3650.25	3380.44	92.61
2021-22	4071.23	3764.69	3728.99	99.05
2022-23	3980.77	4182.00	4024.13	96.23
2023-24	4692.00	4449.76	4314.24	96.95
2024-25	4342.55	-	-	-

10. The Ministry had proposed Rs. 5017.64 crore for 2024-25 and the allocation made is Rs. 4342.00 crore. The details of the proposed and allocated amount, for the three categories of the Ministry, for the year 2024-25, are as under:-

(Rs. in Crore)		
Categories	Proposed amount for 2024-25	Allocated amount for 2024-25 at BE stage
Establishment Expenditure of the Centre	640.80	566.41
Central Sector Schemes	1576.24	1004.31
Other Central Expenditure, including those on Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and Autonomous Bodies	2800.60	2771.83
TOTAL	5017.64 crore	4342.55

11. The details of the budgetary allocations and actual expenditure (BE, RE & AE), under the aforesaid three categories during the last four years and the BE allocations for the year 2024-25, are as under:-

Year	Establishment Expenditure of the Centre				Central Sector Schemes					Other Central Expenditure				Total		
	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. RE	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. RE	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. RE	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. RE
2020-21	554.80	441.82	431.99	97.78	740.00	346.73	333.34	96.14	3080.41	2861.70	2615.11	91.38	4375.21	3650.25	3380.44	92.61
2021-22	563.77	530.47	499.88	94.23	632.05	450.00	452.66	100.59	2875.41	2784.22	2776.45	99.72	4071.23	3764.69	3728.99	99.05
2022-23	582.87	584.84	569.41	97.36	630.00	639.00	569.67	89.15	2767.90	2958.16	2885.05	97.53	3980.77	4182.00	4024.13	96.23
2023-24*	535.50	551.00	524.45	95.18	1105.00	1027.28	1037.02	100.95	3051.50	2871.48	2752.77	95.87	4692.00	4449.76	4314.24	96.95
2024-25	566.41	--	--	--	1004.31	--	--	--	2771.83	--	--	--	4342.55	--	--	--

(*) AE 2021-22 and AE 2023-24, in respect of Central Sector Schemes, is more than RE 2021-22 and RE 2023-24, on account of enhancement of allocation at Final Estimates stage at ₹ 476.35 crore and ₹ 1084.51 crore respectively

12. The Ministry were asked to provide reasons for underutilization of funds during 2023-24, if any, in the Establishment Expenditure of the Centre (which includes establishment expenditure of Main Secretariat and attached/sub-ordinate offices of the Ministry) and the Central Sector Schemes. To this, the Ministry replied as under:-

“Optimal utilization of funds have been made in 2023-24 as around 97.94 % of allocated BE 2023-24 has been utilized in the Establishment of the Centre (which includes establishment expenditure of Main Secretariat and attached/sub-ordinate offices of the Ministry).

Ministry has done optimal utilization of funds during 2023-24 as 100.95% of the allocated RE 2023-24 has been utilized in the Central Sector Schemes.”

13. Further, it was stated that:-

“There was optimal utilization of funds during 2023-24. Percentage of Actual Expenditure with respect to Film, Information and Broadcasting Sector was 92.97%, 117.10 % and 92.96% respectively”.

14. Regarding the reasons for reduction in the Budgetary Estimate (BE) for Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 2024-25 in comparison to 2023-24 and the steps proposed by the Ministry to fill the gap of Rs. 300 crore (approx.) and mitigate the effect of reduced BE on the continuing schemes and new schemes announced, if any, the Ministry replied as under:-

₹ in crore			
Category	Budget Estimates 2024-25	Budget Estimates 2023-24	Additionality/Reduction over Budget Estimates 2023-24
Establishment Expenditure	566.41	535.50	30.91
Central Sector Scheme	1004.31	1105.00	-100.69
Other Central Expenditure	2771.83	3051.50	-279.67
Total	4342.55	4692.00	-349.45

“It may be observed from the table that there is no reduction in the budget under the Establishment category. However, there is reduction of ₹ 100.69 crore under Central Sector Scheme i.e., Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) Scheme. Further, there was a reduction of ₹279.67 crore under the Other Central Expenditure Budget of the Ministry which is attributable to retirement of government employees who are on deemed deputation in Prasar Bharati, resulting in reduced demand in respect of pay and allowances as well as retirement benefits”.

15. Further, it was stated that:-

“The reasons for reduced demand during FY 2024-25 including under the BIND Scheme are: -

- (i) time taken in framing specifications of new projects like Visual-Radio, which were first of its kind;
- (ii) erection of tower works due to technical and administrative issues;
- (iii) process of seeking the Make in India (MII) Exemption for procurement of electronic equipment; and
- (iv) multiple attempts for tender procurement of 1,20,000 DTH sets for distribution in tribal, remote and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) areas, etc. Technical evaluation of tenders, received towards procurement of 1.2 Lakh DTH Receiver sets [Non-Conditional Access System (CAS)] + 7.5 Lakh DTH Receiver sets, envisaged to be procured under Project mode, was proceeded with. However, now the Ministry is considering adopting the Direct Benefit Transfer mode for distributing the STBs for DD Free Dish, and the modalities are being worked out, in consultation with MHA and pending litigation.

It is mentioned that in case of any additional requirement, Ministry will request for funds at Revised Estimates stage as per the spirit of budgetary tenets”.

16. Dealing with Budget for dissemination, the Secretary of the Ministry during evidence submitted as under:-

“While the demands on that budget have been increasing over time, media and the multiple forms of media that have emerged especially the electronic media, the digital media and now the social media, the requirement for budget and dissemination is huge. But we have not been able to get appropriate allocation. Ever since the new Government has taken over, our hon. Minister has made a note of this, and he has directed us to create various schemes.

जहां-जहां पर हमारी जो एग्जिस्टिंग स्कीम्स हैं, उन स्कीम्स में दो साल बचे हुए हैं, हमारा फण्ड खत्म हो चुका है, तो उन स्कीम्स से रिलेटेड एक्स्ट्रा एलोकेशन कराने के लिए हम लोगों ने फाइनेंस डिपार्टमेंट को अप्रोच किया है। हम कुछ नई स्कीम्स को भी तैयार कर रहे हैं, जिसमें डिजिटल

मीडिया और सोशल मीडिया में इन्फॉर्मेशन डिसेमिनेशन को आगे बढ़ा सकें। इन सारी स्कीम्स में हम कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि रिवाइज्ड एलोकेशन बजट आएगा, लेकिन उससे पहले हमारे कुछ प्रोजेक्ट्स हो जाएं। कुछ नई स्कीम्स और नए प्रोग्राम्स लाकर ही यह बजट बढ़ सकता है, जिसकी हम लोग कोशिश कर रहे हैं।

Hopefully, in the Revised Estimates this year and in the budget for the next year, we should be able to sort out the budget allocations. It is a fact that we are feeling this crunch. In fact, in many categories हमने अपने बजट को ओवर स्पेंड भी कर दिया है। There are pending bills which we also need to take note of.”

17. The Schemes that had maximum and minimum progress from 2019-20 to 2023-24, can be seen as under:-

Year	Scheme with minimum progress	% utilization of scheme with minimum progress (w.r.t RE)	Scheme with maximum progress	% utilization of scheme with maximum progress (w.r.t RE)
2019-20	Development Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content	89.07%	Up-gradation of IIMC to International Standards (IIMC)	100%
2020-21	1. Development Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content 2. Champion Services Sector Scheme	85.84%	Broadcasting Infrastructure Network Development (PrasarBharati)	101.47%
		0%		
2021-22	Supporting Community Radio Movement in India	76.80%	DCID	112.35%
2022-23	Broadcasting Infrastructure Network Development	50.77%	DCID	146.86%

	(PrasarBharati)			
2023-24	Broadcasting Infrastructure Network Development (PrasarBharati)	72.71%	DCID	176.16%

18. Asked about the measures envisaged for effective utilization of the budgetary allocation during the year 2024-25, the Ministry replied as under:-

“All efforts will be made to utilize the allocated funds from the start of financial year. Monitoring mechanism is strengthened and review of progress of projects is taken up periodically.

The forecast of the budget expenditure is done meticulously to arrive at the correct requirement of the budget. GFR provisions are followed for the expenditure incurred to ensure correct utilization of the budget. The merger of 4 film media units with NFDC would synergize the activities undertaken under DCDFC scheme leading to effective utilization of budgetary allocation during FY 2024-25.

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has been reviewing the expenditure of Prasar Bharati periodically and Prasar Bharati has been advised to regularly review the projects through an annual action plan to be undertaken and monitored at least on a monthly basis both from physical and financial progress point of view. The progress of expenditure is also being monitored closely at the senior officer levels.

Prasar Bharati has adopted digital techniques in office functioning such as e-office, email, CAS (Centralized Accounting Software) and TSA for fund release for the scheme. These have made the system fast, efficient and transparent”.

19. Further, it was stated that:-

“A comprehensive content procurement policy has been approved by Prasar Bharati which clearly defines the processes and guidelines for procurement of content under different procurement models.

Multiple new policies have been approved by Prasar Bharati Board (PBB) to streamline content procurement as mentioned below:-

- Policy Guidelines for Commissioning of Programmes under DAP (Direct Assignment Process) and an Online Portal has been launched for the same
- Policy Guidelines for acquisition of Licensed Ready-Made Audio-Visual Content and an Online Portal has been launched for the same
- Policy for Procurement of Feature Films for Prasar Bharati Platforms on Fixed License Fee – 2021”.

20. On being asked, if there were any announcements w.r.t. new Schemes/Programmes in the Union Budget 2024-25, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, replied as under:-

“No announcement has been made in the Union Budget 2024-25 for the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting”.

However, the thrust areas of the Ministry, for the year 2024-25, are as under:-

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) based communication hub;
- Reaching the last mile through Social Media;
- Strengthening of Press Registrar General of India interface;
- Overhauling of IIMC;
- Making India a preferred shooting destination for Film and Television producers around the world under the umbrella of Champion Service Sector Scheme;
- Formulation of National Policy for the growth of AVGC-XR in the country
- Online Registration of Local Cable Operators;
- Promotion of Ease of Filming through India Cine Hub (ICH) portal”.

IV. CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES (CSS)

21. In order to have an effective and better utilization of resources, a comprehensive rationalization and restructuring of the Plan Schemes was carried out by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 2019-20, which have been implemented in 2020-21. Various small schemes/programmes with similar objectives and activities spread across different media units have been merged together under umbrella schemes. New sub-schemes required for further strengthening of different activities have been clubbed with main schemes. As a result, the Ministry undertook rationalization of ‘Central Sector Schemes’ and as a result 14 schemes and 13 sub-schemes were reduced to 5 ‘Central Sector Schemes’ (CSS). Since the objectives of the ‘Champion Services Sector Scheme’ (CSSS) and ‘Development Communication and Dissemination of Filmic Content (DCDFC)’ Scheme are closely related, CSSS has been merged with DCDFC scheme from financial year 2022-23 onwards. So, currently there are 4 ‘Central Sector Schemes’ viz. Development Communication & Information Dissemination (DCID), Development Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content (DCDFC), Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) and Supporting Community Radio Movement in India.

22. Rationalization of Central Sector Schemes of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has been undertaken in accordance with the Standard Operating

Procedure directed by Department of Expenditure in 2020-2021. At present, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has Four Central Sector Schemes as follows:-

Sl. No.	Central Sector Schemes	Objectives
i.	Development Communication & Information Dissemination (DCID) <u>(Information Sector)</u>	This scheme is targeted towards meeting the requirements of publicity for various Government Schemes. The primary objective of the scheme is to generate awareness that will enable targeted beneficiary to avail the benefits of developmental schemes of the Government, to elicit enhanced participation of the people in the process of development and governance, to ensure the upkeep of a healthy and clean environment for sustainable and green growth and to enable better public compliance.
ii.	Development, Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content (DCDFC) Scheme <u>(Film Sector)</u>	The scheme Development, Communication and Dissemination of Filmic Content was launched to promote and preserve quality Indian cinemas by means of hosting film festivals, producing new films documentaries, collecting and maintaining film archives and adopting anti-piracy initiatives. The scheme aims to synergize activities of various media units in participation and organization of international film festivals in India and abroad for showcasing Indian cinema to a large and versatile audience. It wishes to facilitate production, distribution and marketing of all genres of Indian Cinemas, including films in regional languages. It also works to promote and build institutions that play a part towards conservation and preservation of the filmic heritage of India and to initiate steps to prevent unlawful use of filmic content.
iii.	Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) <u>(Broadcasting Sector)</u>	The scheme Broadcast Infrastructure Network Development consists of a wide range of initiatives taken up by Prasar Bharati to cover the national television-based broadcaster Doordarshan and radio-based broadcaster All India Radio. The scheme aims to improve physical infrastructure of both, Doordarshan and All India Radio to incorporate latest state-of-the-art technology as well as ensure universal and public access to their offerings. The objective of the scheme is to expand the networks and upgrade quality of programmes and transmission on both mediums through a list of interventions decided upon within the scheme.
iv.	Supporting Community Radio Movement in India	The scheme aims to strengthen new and existing CRSs with resources, capacity and technology in order to upgrade the standard of the stations and increase reach and visibility to the interior regions of India. This would help promote growth of CRS in remote and rural areas thereby aiding

		socio-economic and cultural development of communities by using CRS as a powerful medium of social mobilization. The scheme therefore aims to revitalize new and existing CRSs by providing required funds for resources, capacity and technology thereby increasing effectiveness of operational community radio stations.
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23. Overall budgetary allocation and utilization (BE, RE and AE) under Central Sector Schemes for the years 2020-21 to 2023-24 and BE for the year 2024-25 are as under:-

CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES				(Rs. in Crore)
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t RE
2020-21	740.00	346.73	333.34	96.14
2021-22*	632.05	450.00	452.66	100.59
2022-23	630.00	639.00	569.67	89.15
2023-24#	1105.00	1027.28	1037.02	100.95
2024-25	1004.31	-	-	-

(*) Total Allocation for schemes was enhanced to ₹ 476.35 cr in Final Estimates

(#) Total Allocation for schemes was enhanced to ₹ 1084.51 cr in Final Estimates

24. Details of the budgetary allocation and utilization under each Central Sector Scheme for the last four years are as under:-

INFORMATION SECTOR						(Rs. in crore)
1. Development Communication & Information Dissemination (DCID)						
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. BE	% w.r.t. RE	
2020-21	220.00	103.40	100.39	45.63	97.09	
2021-22*	188.00	188.00	211.21	112.34	112.34	
2022-23**	184.00	194.00	284.90	154.84	146.86	
2023-24#	200.00	197.28	347.52	173.76	176.16	
2024-25	149.31	-	-	-	-	
(*)Allocation under DCID scheme enhanced to ₹ 214.35 cr in Final Estimates						
(**)Allocation under DCID scheme enhanced to ₹298.04 cr in Final Estimates						
(#)Allocation under DCID scheme enhanced to ₹ 353.52 cr in Final Estimates						
FILM SECTOR						
2. Development Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content (DCDFC)						
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. BE	% w.r.t. RE	
2020-21	115.50	63.51	54.52	47.20	85.84	

2021-22	122.62	84.50	77.85	63.49	92.13
2022-23	127.16	127.00	122.86	96.62	96.74
2023-24	300.00	350.00	339.88	113.29	97.11
2024-25	350.00	-	-	-	-
BROADCASTING SECTOR					
3. Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (Prasar Bharati)					
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. BE	% w.r.t. RE
2020-21#	370.00	173.90	176.46	47.69	101.47
2021-22	316.00	175.00	161.68	51.16	92.39
2022-23	315.00	315.00	159.91	50.77	50.77
2023-24	600.00	475.00	345.38	57.56	72.71
2024-25	500.00	-	-	-	-
(#) The allocation under this scheme was enhanced to Rs.182.03 crore in Final Grant 2020-21.					
4. Supporting Community Radio Movement in India (SCR)					
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. BE	% w.r.t. RE
2020-21	4.50	2.12	1.97	43.78	92.92
2021-22	3.84	2.50	1.92	50.00	76.80
2022-23	3.84	3.00	2.00	52.08	66.66
2023-24	5.00	5.00	4.24	84.80	84.80
2024-25	5.00	-	-	-	-

25. During the year 2023-24, there was underutilization of funds in respect of Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) and Supporting Community Radio in India Schemes as actual expenditure was 72.71% and 84.80% of RE allocations. When asked for the details of the impact of reduced allocation of funds, at RE stage during the year 2023-24, on these Schemes, alongwith the reasons for under-utilization of funds allocated for each of these Central Sector Schemes, the Ministry replied as under:-

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	The impact of the reduced allocation of fund, at RE stage during the year 2023-24, on the Central Sector Schemes	Reasons for under-utilization of funds on the Central Sector Schemes during the year 2023-24
(i)	Broadcasting	Reduction of Rs.	The reason for underutilization of

	<p>Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND)</p>	<p>125.00 crore at RE stage impacted the BIND scheme.</p>	<p>funds are enumerated as under:</p> <p>i. Delay in Procurement of various items like Desktop computers, audio broadcast processors and Liquid cooled 10KW FM transmitters at various stations.</p> <p>ii. Delay in the erection of Tower at Suryapet, Ooty, Dhanbad, Bardhaman, Koenjhar, Narkatiaganj, Sitamarhi, Bathnaha & Namsai under FM Expansion.</p> <p>iii. The tendering /procurement action for departmental works could also not be taken-up at some of the places.</p> <p>iv. The production house could not submit the Final telecast masters of the programme “Jai Bharati”, during March 2024, payment of 9 episodes could not be made during the FY 2023-24. Additional episodes in respect of the programme “Sardar-The Game Changer” could not be provided by the production house during March 2024 for making 80% payment of the cost of episodes.</p> <p>v. Payment for dubbing of 16 out of 75 episodes of Swaraj serial in 9 different languages, could not be made to the production House due to non-submission of deliverables by the production house during March 2024.</p> <p>vi. As very few programmes were produced by NE Kendras from the budget provided to them from BIND, the NER allocation could not be fully utilized.</p>
<p>(ii)</p>	<p>Supporting Community Radio</p>	<p>No reduction of allocated fund at RE Stage</p>	<p>Under the Scheme “Supporting Community Radio movement in India” Various activities such as Community Radio Workshops, Capacity Building for existing Community Radios were carried out in an online mode, which resulted in savings. Further No demand for financial assistance was received from CRS hailing</p>

			from North Eastern Region.
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26. Regarding plans to improve the performance under each Scheme under Central Sector Schemes during the year 2024-25, the Ministry submitted as under:-

Central Sector Schemes	Plans to improve the performance under each Scheme/Media Units under Central Sector Schemes for the year 2024-25
Development Communication & Information Dissemination (DCID)	Based on the track record of achievements made under the DCID scheme during the previous year, the targets for 2024-25 have been fixed. Various ongoing activities under the Scheme will also be continued during the FY 2024-25.
Development Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content (DCDFC)	<p>i) In order to make the implementation more effective and to improve plan expenditure, the various measures taken by the Ministry include periodic review, mid-term appraisal of all major schemes and regular monitoring of expenditure and implementation.</p> <p>ii) Quarterly/ Monthly performance review of the progress of physical and financial targets in respect of the schemes is held at the meetings of the Senior Officers of the Ministry chaired by Secretary (I&B). The concerned Joint Secretary also regularly monitors the implementation of schemes under their charge. Various mid-course corrections are suggested to ensure full utilization of allocated resources.</p>
Champion Service Sector	Under Champion Service Sector, the Ministry will be organizing a global level summit, World Audio-visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) in February, 2025 to establish India as a soft power in the Media and Entertainment Sector.
Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND)	<p>Most of the broadcast equipment are imported with no production in India. Make –in –India (MII) clause exemptions are to be taken for each project in regard to Broadcast Equipment. This procedure takes considerable time. Matter is being pursued at appropriate level on day to day basis.</p> <p>It is the constant endeavor of Prasar Bharati to complete the projects within the specified time frame. Monitoring mechanism has been strengthened considerably. Procurement procedures have been streamlined. Project review meetings are held regularly at Zonal level & HQ level and various activities involved in procurement of capital equipment and execution of works are critically assessed &</p>

	<p>targets are fixed. The frequency of monitoring meetings has been increased at all levels of Directorate & Prasar Bharati Sectt. Use of digital platform viz e-office, e-tendering, procurement through GEM, Video conference is also being utilized.</p> <p>In addition to above, a dedicated IPMC (Integrated Project Monitoring Cell) has been created under the chairmanship of CEO (PB) to monitor the progress of projects and improvement in their implementation.</p>
<p>Supporting Community Radio</p>	<p>The following activities under the Central Sector Scheme namely “Supporting Community Radio Movement in India” for improving the performance and outcome of the Scheme.</p> <p>Organising National Community Radio Sammelan</p> <p>(a) Offering Internship and fellowship in Community Radio Stations.</p> <p>(b) Organizing 5 community radio workshops in community radio dark areas</p> <p>(c) Organizing 4 regional Sammelans</p> <p>(d) Capacity building workshops through Indian institute of mass communication (IIMC).</p> <p>(e) Study/ Survey for assessing reach and effectiveness for community radio Stations.</p> <p>Increase in amount of financial assistance.</p>

V. **BROADCASTING SECTOR (INCLUDING PRASAR BHARATI)**

27. The Broadcasting Sector is broadly categorized into two categories viz. ‘Content’ and ‘Carriage services’. This Ministry regulates the content of private satellite channels and networks of Multi-System Operatots (MSOs) and Local Cable Operators (LCO) through the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, and policy guidelines issued from time to time. Broadcasting Carriage services include Multi-System Operators (MSOs)/Local Cable Operators (LCOs), Direct-to-Home (DTH) operators, Headend-In-The- Sky (HITS) operators and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) service providers. It gives license/permission to DTH/HITS operators for their respective operations.

(i) **Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND)**

The scheme Broadcast Infrastructure Network Development consists of a wide range of initiatives taken up by Prasar Bharati to cover the national television-based broadcaster Doordarshan and radio-based broadcaster All India Radio. The scheme aims to improve physical infrastructure of both, Doordarshan and All India Radio to incorporate latest State-of-the-Art technology as well as to ensure universal and public access to their offerings. The objective of the scheme is to expand the networks and upgrade quality of programmes and transmission on both mediums through a list of interventions decided upon within the scheme.

28. BIND Scheme also provides support to Prasar Bharati for Modernisation (including Digitisation) Augmentation & Replacement of Transmitters; Modernization Augmentation & Replacement of Satellite Broadcast equipment; Modernisation and digitalisation of studios/New studios; Expansion of DTH; High-Definition TV (HDTV); Augmentation of Civil Infrastructure including Staff Quarters and other works; Strengthening of Coverage in sensitive areas; Expansion of DD Free Dish DTH Platform; DTH Disaster Recovery Centre; Automation & Modernisation of Program Production Facilities to HD; Automation & Modernisation of Program Production Facilities to HD; Augmentation of News Production Equipment; Technology for content Innovation (i) Content Enrichment Technology including Video Walls, Virtual Sets AR equipment and Pilot on VR solution (ii) Pilot Project on 4K/ UHD Content Production (iii) Pilot Project on Studio; DD Free Dish STBs distribution in strategic areas (approx. 8.7 Lakh units with App-based authorisation) and streaming of Radio Channels available on DD Free Dish through Wi-Fi hotspots.

29. In their submission to the Committee, the Ministry stated that projects suffered under BIND Scheme due to underutilization of funds during the year 2023-24, which included New Projects like Visual-Radio (which are of first of its kind) and erection of Radio Towers due to technical and administrative issues. On being asked to elaborate the effects of such failures on the beneficiaries and the steps taken by the Ministry to overcome such issues in future, the Ministry replied that:-

“In the FY 2023-24 around 50% funds were utilized for content creation under BIND. Some projects of Doordarshan for content creation, though not adversely affected, got delayed in NER. The NE Region was given these BIND Scheme works for the first time. The expenditure mechanism for BIND being altogether different from that of IEBR and shortage of programme staff at each NER Kendra led to inevitable delays. However, now these DDKs have been trained adequately and the expenditure mechanism is now fully in place. It is expected

that from the current financial year 2024-25, full funds allocated under BIND scheme to Doordarshan Kendras of North-East Region would be utilised in content creation. Hiring of programme professionals on contract basis is also being done to support content creation.

The Visual Radio project being a first-of-its-kind initiative for Akashvani, was hindered initially due to it being a novel concept. However, the initial issues have been addressed by revising and firming up its design specifications. Its procurement has commenced through the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal and is expected to be completed within this financial year.

The erection of RadioTowers project got delayed due to technical and administrative issues and for this project, new Sites at 15 places is required. However, at 12 places, the sites have been allotted. Payments are to be made for the site acquisition. The Building work and tower work will be taken up after the site acquisition. Further, project review meeting have been held with all the zones regularly. All zones have been advised to clear off the pending bills & reflect actual expenditure in expenditure statement so as to plan re-appropriation of fund /additional fund/ saving of fund, if any. They have been asked to make extra efforts to achieve physical & financial targets in time bound manner.”

30. When the Committee asked the reasons for non-utilization of allotted funds and the road map for effective and optimum utilization of funds especially for BIND scheme, as 27.28% of the fund allocated to Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) remained unutilized in 2023-24, the Ministry inter-alia replied that:-

“Reasons for Savings for BIND 2023-24

1. Delay in procurement of Audio Broadcast Processors as associated equipment of FM Transmitters.
2. Payment for refurbishing of Akashvani Studios, Replacement of ACs & Gensets under face lift of Akashvani Channels could not be done.
3. Payment for Audio Broadcast Processor could not be done due to delay in supply of the equipment.
4. The tendering /procurement action for departmental works could also not be taken-up at some of the places.

5. Multiple attempts were made for tender procurement of 1,20,000 Direct To Home (DTH) sets for distribution in tribal, remote and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. M/o Information & Broadcasting has given approval to procure Free to Air (FTA) DTH, non-Conditional Access System (CAS), non-Return Path Data (RPD) Receive sets [with Set Top Boxes (STBs)] with the provision of app based/ call based/ Short Message Service (SMS) based authorization and activation facility under the BIND Scheme. Accordingly, Technical evaluation of tenders received towards procurement of 1.2 Lakh DTH Receive sets (Non-CAS) + 7.5 Lakh DTH receive sets envisaged to be procured under SITC mode. However, after further deliberations, this was envisaged to be done under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode for which Prasar Bharati is now working on its modalities.

6. As very few programmes were produced by North Eastern (NE) Kendras from the budget provided to them from BIND, the North Eastern Region (NER) allocation could not be fully utilized”.

31. Enumerating the steps taken for better/optimum utilisation of funds, the Ministry submitted that:-

“

1. Continuous monitoring is being done by the top level officers of Prasar Bharati/Directorate.

2. Treasury Single Accounting (TSA) System has been adopted for effective utilization of funds of GOI. Therefore, real time monitoring of fund flow may be observed by MIB.

3. All the payment is being done through e-CAS System including release of Letter of Credit (LOC), etc.

4. Use of digital platform viz e-office, e-tendering, procurement through Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Video conference is also being utilized.

5. In addition to above, a dedicated IPMC (Integrated Project Monitoring Cell) has been created under the chairmanship of CEO (PB) to monitor the progress of projects and improvement in their implementation”.

32. On enquiring about the status of Direct Benefit Transfer (BDT) for distributing Set-top Box (es) for DD Free Dish and litigations pending in this regard, the Ministry replied that:-

“As Ministry is considering distribution of DD Free Dish Set-Top Boxes in Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode, modalities of the distribution are being worked out by Prasar Bharati. Consultations are also being done with the Ministry of Home Affairs to collect the beneficiary bank details and finalize payment eligibility

criteria for the beneficiaries. Prasar Bharati is also in consultation with Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association (CEAMA) and India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) to ensure availability of DD Free Dish Set-Top Boxes in remote border areas and arrangement of installation and after-sales services of the Set-Top Boxes”.

33. About the preparedness to mitigate the effect of less expenditure of funds allocated under BIND and its effect on the overall expenditure of the Ministry, the CEO, Prasar Bharati, during evidence submitted as under:-

“The जो बाइंड (Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development - BIND) के एक्सपेंडिचर का सवाल है, तो बाइंड के एक्सपेंडिचर में पिछले दो वित्तीय वर्षों से लगभग 170-180 करोड़ प्रति वर्ष का खर्चा हो रहा था। हमें बाइंड की सहमति वर्ष 2021 से 2026 की अवधि की योजना है। हमें उसकी सहमति जनवरी, 2023 में प्राप्त हुई। चूंकि, हम अपने मैक्सिमम आइटम्सइस नेटवर्क के एक्सपैंशन के लिए बनाते हैं, वे या तो इम्पोर्टेड होते हैं या उनमें हमें मेक इन इंडिया की छूट लेनी होती है। ये काफी टेक्निकल किस्म के आइटम्स हैं, जिनके काफी विस्तृत स्पेसिफिकेशंस होते हैं, जो इंडस्ट्री कंसल्टेशन के साथ तैयार किए जाते हैं। चूंकि, टेक्नोलॉजी का फील्ड होने के नाते इसमें जो स्पेसिफिकेशंस बनते हैं, वे बहुत जल्दी ऑब्सलीट भी हो जाते हैं। इसमें हमारी तैयार पहले से थी और आइटम्स आइडेंटिफाई थे, लेकिन जनवरी, 2023 में हमें स्वीकृति प्राप्त होने के बाद तेजी के साथ इसमें स्पेक्स तैयार करके मेक इन इंडिया के एग्जम्प्लस के लिए मूव किया और साथ में उसके इम्पोर्ट की कार्रवाई भी प्रारम्भ की। इस कारण से वर्ष 2023 से पहले के दो वर्ष थे, उनमें 170-180 करोड़ रुपये का वार्षिक व्यय होता था, वह वर्ष 2023-24 में उससे दोगुना हो गया। इसमें करीब 345 करोड़ के आस-पास टोटल एक्सपेंडिचर हुआ था। अभी भी वर्तमान में हमारे लगभग 500 करोड़ के टेंडर्स ऑलरेडीप्लेस हो चुके हैं। इसके अलावा अन्य 600 करोड़ रुपये के आस-पास के हमारे स्पेक्स फाइनल हो रहे हैं, जिनके टेण्डर अगले दो-तीन महीने के भीतर जारी कर देंगे। मुझे इसमें विश्वास है कि इसमें जो व्यय की गति है, जिसको लेकर माननीय सदस्यों ने प्रश्न उठाए हैं, उनको हमलोग यहां पर एड्रेस कर सकेंगे।”

34. The Budgetary allocation and utilisation for BIND during the last four years along with BE for 2024-25 submitted by the Ministry, are as under:-

Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (Prasar Bharati)					(Rs. in crore)	
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. BE	% w.r.t. RE	
2020-21#	370.00	173.90	176.46	47.69	101.47	
2021-22	316.00	175.00	161.68	51.16	92.39	
2022-23	315.00	315.00	159.91	50.77	50.77	
2023-24	600.00	475.00	345.39	57.56	72.71	
2024-25	500.00	-	-	-	-	

(#)Allocation under this scheme enhanced to Rs. 182.03 cr in Final Estimates 2020-21.

35. When the Committee wanted to be apprised of the action plan of the Ministry to improve the physical and financial performance of the Prasar Bharati during 2024-25, the Ministry replied as under:-

“Some of the action plans of Ministry to improve the physical and financial performance of the Prasar Bharati during 2024-25 are as under:

1. Apart from the Nodal officers in Prasar Bharati, Doordarshan and Akashvani, the project wise nodal officers at the field level and key persons/stakeholders engaged in the execution of the projects would be identified for better and efficient coordination, supervision and monitoring of the projects under BIND Scheme.

2. Weekly and fortnightly convening of meetings in the hybrid mode with them for review of the projects at the senior level to discuss the issues and address them.

3. Use of social media to bring all the stakeholders on a single platform to raise their concerns/issues which cause hindrances in the implementation of a project, and their immediate resolution by assigning the same immediately on the same platform to the person concerned. This would be done regularly on real-time basis.

4. Connecting to the end-person, sometimes to the suppliers/contractors for immediate completion of the project.

5. Making Prasar Bharati to convene periodic meetings in the hybrid mode, firstly on weekly basis followed by fortnightly basis and then on monthly basis till the end of this FY, with the PB employees at the field level to train them and make them aware of implementation of BIND scheme and booking of expenditure through Treasury Single Account (TSA).

6. Apart from assigning the responsibility to a nodal officer each from PB, DD and AIR, assigning each project to one officer (DDG/DD/AD level) in PB and entrusting responsibility upon them for overall performance of that project. Simultaneously, boosting their morale, for timely implementation of a project, through way of honorarium by PB, recording their achievement in their APAR, and appreciation and commendation from Secretary (I&B)/CEO (Prasar Bharati).

7. Revising Prasar Bharati's disbursal mechanism".

36. When asked for the year-wise details of the funds for BIND, the Ministry submitted as under:-

(Rs. in crore)		
Financial Year	Year wise Allocation	Expenditure
2022-23	315.00 (RE)	159.91
2023-24	475.00 (RE)	345.39 (until 01.04.2024)

(a) **DOORDARSHAN**

37. According to the Ministry, there are 35 satellite TV channels (7 All India channels and 28 Regional/State channels). The details are as under:-

All India Channels(8)	DD National	DD News	DD Sports
	DD Bharati	DD Urdu	DD Kisan
	DD India*		
24x7 Regional Channels (27)	DD Sahyadri	DD Girnar	DD Podhigai
	DD Yadalgiri	DD Saptagiri	DD Bangla
	DD Punjabi	DD Odia	DD Malyalam
	DD Chandana	DD Assam	DD Rajasthan
	DD Bihar	DDUP	DDMP
	DD Arunprabha	DD Uttarakhand	DD Jharkhand
	DD Chhattisgarh	DD Himachal Pradesh	DD Meghalaya
	DD Goa	DD Haryana	DD Nagaland
	DD Tripura	DD Mizoram	DD Manipur
	DD Kshir		

**DD India channel has international presence also*

38. Regarding the status of Modernization of channels, the Ministry submitted as under:-

“The Modernization / upgradation of Doordarshan network by utilizing modern techniques and equipment is a continuous process. Modernization plan covers a broad spectrum, which inter-alia includes digitalization, adoption of new technologies at par with international standards, replacement of old ageing/outlived equipment and upgradation etc. Schemes in this regard are

formulated and implemented from time to time depending upon available resources and inter-se priority.

Under these central schemes, upgradation and expansion of Broadcasting infrastructure has been carried out from time to time. Current Scheme is BIND 2021-26”.

39. The details of the physical targets set and achieved under Doordarshan, during the year 2023-24 as submitted by the Ministry are at **Annexure ‘A’**.

40. To a specific question as to which all States/UTs did not have any separate Channel or even Limited Hours, the Ministry replied as under:-

Sl. No.	Name of State/UT	Remarks
1.	Sikkim	PGF Gangtok has limited hour local cable and terrestrial transmission. It has dedicated 2 hour window on DD Arunprabha channel, which is a satellite channel available over almost all over the country.
2.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands(<i>Port Blair</i>)	PGF Portblair has limited hour terrestrial transmission
3.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (<i>Daman</i>)	Issues related to Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (<i>Daman</i>) are being covered by DD Girnar time to time
4.	The Government of NCT of Delhi(<i>Delhi</i>)	Apart from DD India, 6 National Channels are operating from Delhi.
5.	Ladakh(<i>Leh</i>)	PGF Leh has limited hour terrestrial transmission. It has dedicated slots on DD Kashir channel, which is a satellite channel available over almost all over the country.
6.	Lakshadweep(<i>Kavaratti</i>)	Issues related to Lakshadweep(<i>Kavaratti</i>) are being covered by DD Malayalam time to time

7.	Chandigarh(<i>Chandigarh</i>)	DD Haryana, a channel with 24x7 operations is being beamed from DDK Chandigarh.
8.	Puducherry(<i>Puducherry</i>)	A dedicated channel is being operated by PGF Puducherry beamed from DDK Chennai on test transmission basis.

41. About the reach of Doordarshan including its regional channels in terms of viewership, the Ministry submitted that:-

“Viewership details of regional channel of Doordarshan are listed below-

Source: BARC
Market : All India
Target Group : All 2+ Yrs
Period: Yr 2024 (till 27th Sep)
Cume Reach
DD Network”

Channel	Gross Unique Viewers (in Millions)
DD National	260.5
DD News	224.8
DD Sports	152.1
DD Kisan	151.5
DD Uttar Pradesh	140.0
DD Tamil	125.9
DD Sahyadri	112.1
DD Punjabi	112.1
DD India	110.0
DD Madhya Pradesh	104.6
DD Girnar	99.4
DD Yadagiri	92.9
DD Rajasthan	89.1
DD Saptagiri	79.8
DD Bihar	71.1
DD Chandana	67.9
DD Kashir	60.0
DD Bangla	59.1
DD Oriya	44.1
DD Malayalam	42.5
DD Network	656.4

42. With respect to the challenges faced by Doordarshan in expanding their outreach and measures taken to tackle those challenges, the Ministry replied as under:-

“Doordarshan’s initiative for improving content and airing new content are as follows:-

Doordarshan has made continuous planning and effort to invigorate the programming landscape of Doordarshan.

These efforts include a spectrum of initiatives aimed at enriching the viewer experience and elevating the channel's standing in the broadcasting arena”.

43. While furnishing the key milestones achieved, the Ministry inter-alia submitted that:-

"Program Expansion and Revival: Drawing upon an extensive review of proposals housed within the DAP, some of the selected programmes were given approval. Noteworthy additions to the lineup include "Janaki" Serial by the esteemed filmmaker Sh. Subhash Ghai, "Avantika" by the talented Ms. Seema Kapoor, the thought-provoking "Jai Bharati" by Sh. Mahesh Pandey, and the captivating narrative of "Jahan Chand Rehta Hai" by Preeti Kumeria.

Feature Film Resumption: The resumption of Hindi Feature Film telecast on DD National recommenced from 22nd April 2023 after a break of a few years. Introduction of feature films gave the desired result and there was a marked increase in the viewership. Later, weekend Hindi Feature Films in evening prime time were also introduced.

DD National given a facelift: National channel of Doordarshan was given a facelift from 15 August 2023. The look and feel of the channel was changed. New logo was introduced. New tagline “ देश का पहला चैनल , देश का अपना चैनल” was introduced too .

Taking it forward, new programmes were introduced both in the commissioned, sponsored and RSM category and new programmes programs were started – Jaanaki , Jahan Chand Rehta Hai , SIIKHO , Sone Ki Chidiya , Chhotki Chhotanki, KTB- Bharat Hai Hum etc

Extensive OB Coverages: Doordarshan has undertaken a series of ambitious outside broadcasting (OB) initiatives, ranging from the immersive coverage of the Shri Ram Temple Pran Prathishta program in Ayodhya to the live telecast of significant events such as "Meri Mati Mera Desh" and the ISRO launch, culminating in the highly anticipated revival of one of the most iconic television classic "Ramayan."

Ratings Surge: The strategic deployment of these compelling programs has yielded a substantial surge in viewer ratings, affirming the channel's resonance with its audience base. The average gross viewership jumped from 129 lakhs

(before April 2023) to 205 lakhs (after April 2023) depicting 59% growth in the viewership on the National Channel.

Marketing Endeavors: Leveraging insights from the studies conducted by the Brand Group M, the channel's programming landscape has been refined to resonate with evolving viewer preferences, resulting in heightened engagement and popularity.

Revenue Sharing Model (RSM): Additionally, the implementation of the Revenue Sharing Model (RSM) has facilitated the initiation of several impactful projects, including "The Kerala STORY" and "Narendra Modi" films thus, further enhancing the channel's content portfolio.

DD Sports has been launched in HD".

44. The Ministry in their written submission stated that Doordarshan (DD) takes BARC data for viewership performance for all the channels of DD and for any specific requirement over and above data, Audience research unit conduct the survey based on the requirement. On being asked whether any survey was conducted in this regard, the Ministry replied as under:-

"Prasar Bharati has presently subscribed to the viewership analytics for 21 SD channels out of 35 channels from M/s Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) for its various DD channels on conventional linear Television viewing.

Recently, Prasar Bharati has conducted a survey through its audience research team in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. Surveys of AIR stations based on the requirements are also carried out by this team. Recently, a survey for NCERT for their program was also conducted by Prasar Bharati.

- The structured questionnaire were designed for collection of data by direct interview method, by engaging part-time interviewers.
- The survey was conducted in 03 states – Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- A total of 2400 TV households was interviewed.
- A sample of 800 TV households consisting of 400 urban and 400 rural in each state will be selected.
- A sample will be drawn randomly from each place and from each household one respondent aged 15 years and above of either sex will be chosen for interview".

45. The Ministry submitted that it assisted the Government in focusing attention of people on issues of National Integration, eradication of illiteracy and elicits the participation of women, children, minorities and other disadvantaged sections of the

society in developmental activities. Asked about how the Ministry intended to ensure that their core objectives were achieved especially when the achievement in the abovementioned areas was not upto the mark, the Ministry replied as under:-

“In this regard, following steps are being taken by Prasar Bharati -

1) Upgradation of Earth Stations of DD Network and Savings in Transponder Capacity:

Upgradation of Earth Stations of DD Network was sanctioned under Broadcasting Infrastructure & Network Development (BIND) Scheme, 2021-26. Accordingly, upgradation of Earth Stations was carried out with spectrum efficient equipment in 2023-24 and all the services were migrated to upgraded Earth Stations. Whereas, for vacating the spare transponder capacity, migration of existing services on revised frequency plan is in the process, and it will be carried out on issuance of revised DL (Decision Letter) / WOL (Wireless Operating License) by Wireless Planning & Coordination (WPC), Department of Telecom. In this regard, the date of validity of transponder will be enabled by signing of MOU between Prasar Bharati and DOS/ISRO, details of which are being worked out.

2) Expansion of DD Free Dish Platform:

Expansion of DD Free Dish Platform was sanctioned under BIND 2021-26 by upgradation of existing four compression chain & monitoring systems and by inclusion of additional 5x36 MHz Ku band Transponder located at 93.5 degree East.

a. Requisition for allotment of 5x36 MHz transponder located at 93.5 degree East, having the footprint of A&N Islands along with main land of India, was given to NSIL/DOS/ISRO. Whereas, NSIL has allotted additional 2 x36 MHz Ku band transponder capacity on GSAT-15 Satellite, which has footprint of only the mainland of India so far. Further, the allotment of the remaining transponders is yet to be received. For smooth migration of DD Channels in SD & HD to spectrum efficient MPEG-4 technology, the additional required transponders will be utilized for simulcast transmission of DD Channels in MPEG-2 and MPEG-4 Technology. Transmission of DD Channels in MPEG-4 technology through the newly provided transponders has been started in June 2024. In the bouquet of DD Free Dish Platform, 60 Channel slots in MPEG-4/DVB-2 technology have been included. Further, procurement of new equipment for transmission of Channels in MPEG-4/DVB-S2 technology through additional two transponders is in process. Further, some of MPEG-2 slots, presently being occupied by DD Channels, are planned to be made available for private channels through e-auctions.

b. In addition to above, procurement of equipment for expansion of DD Free Dish platform by upgradation of existing four Compression chain and Monitoring

Systems is at an advanced stage. Purchase Order is likely to be issued very soon. On the upgradation of existing four compression chain, infrastructure for 34 additional Channel slots in MPEG-4/DVB-S2 technology will be included in the bouquet of DD Free Dish Platform.

3) Distribution of 8.7 Lakhs DD Free Dish Receive sets:

To enhance the viewership and popularization of DD Free Dish Platform in VVP (Vibrant Village Program) areas, BADP (Border Area Development Program), North-East Region, LWE (Left Wing Extremism) affected areas, J&K, and other strategic areas, distribution of 8.7 Lakhs DD Free Dish Receive sets was sanctioned under the BIND Scheme. The data of around 8.10 lakh beneficiaries has been collected through an online portal. Earlier distribution plan progressed in Supply Inspection Testing and Commissioning (SITC) mode, however, now it is being planned under the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode for enhanced transparency and efficiency. PB is working on modalities for distribution of DD Free Dish DTH, with a decentralized model of delivery involving District Administration.

Apart from the DTH system, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting also undertakes campaigns and outreach activities on issues like national integration, eradication of illiteracy, ensuring participation of women and children minorities and other disadvantage section of societies in development activities, etc. The Press Information Bureau (PIB) undertakes these programmes through Vartalaaps on these themes, whereas the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) conducts outreach programmes on these issues”.

46. When the updated status of digitization of all the DD Kendras was sought, the Ministry replied as under:-

“All the DD channels are digitized”.

47. To the query as to whether all the archives of DD had been digitized, the Ministry replied as:-

“Yes, the archives have been digitized to the extent possible. Efforts are being made to complete the remaining digitization at the earliest”.

48. Regarding the efforts made for easy access of the archives and purchase of the recordings available with the Kendra through use of internet, the Ministry replied as under:-

“The archival content of public interest is being showcased through Social Media platforms like YouTube. The interested persons can approach Central Archives through email in order to purchase the recordings/media under the

ambit of various archival policies. Information to this effect has been made public on Prasar Bharati website”.

49. On the progress made w.r.t. digitization of transmitters, studios, etc., under Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) Scheme, the Ministry submitted:-

“Doordarshan setup comprises 66 kendras (studio) all of which are fully digital, except 4 which are partially digital. Satellite channels of DD network have also been digitized. There are 59 terrestrial transmitters at strategic locations in the country and all of these transmitters are analog. Further, Doordarshan had commissioned 23 digital terrestrial transmitters (DTT) in 19 cities under 11th & 12th plan schemes. However, Ministry of I&B vide letter dt 19.12.2018 conveyed that further expansion of Digital Terrestrial Transmission by DD should be undertaken only after finalization of a viable policy on Digital Terrestrial TV. In line with Ministry’s directive Prasar Bharati entered into an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IIT Kanpur to develop Next Generation Broadcast solution/roadmap for Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting consistent with emerging standards such as 5G Broadcast. Further, all the 23 DTTs have been switched-off w.e.f. 31.10.2022 as per decision conveyed vide 140th Management Committee of Prasar Bharati held on 26.09.2022”.

50. Submitting the current status of procurement of equipment for Digitization and the efforts made to simplify the procurement process, the Ministry stated:-

“Digitisation of Doordarshan equipment is going on since last couple of capital plans. DD Studios, Earth stations and OB vans of all Major Kendras have been digitized. Based on the technology innovation, necessary upgradation of equipment in State-of-Art technology is being taken up. To simplify the procurement process, Prasar Bharati has introduced new procurement policy in June 2022. At the same time periodic review is being taken up at Integrated Project Monitoring Cell (IPMC) at Top Management level of Prasar Bharati”.

51. In a written submission made to the Committee, the Ministry has informed that Future technology investments in Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting will be based on the converged roadmap recommended by IIT Kanpur and viability of the same. Furnishing information about its timeline for completion, status on the Digital Terrestrial Transmitters (DTT) in the country and the implementation schedules alongwith problems faced in adhering to timeline for its set up, the Ministry has submitted as under:-

“The Television Broadcasting started in India in 1959 with experimental transmission in Analogue Terrestrial mode and subsequently regular TV broadcast was started in 1965. Over the years, Doordarshan has expanded its

terrestrial network of analogue transmitters which provides TV services comprising of national and regional TV channels in free-to-air mode.

Further technological developments resulted in new generation of DTT technologies and efforts were initiated to migrate to the new technologies. The Countries world over have migrated from analogue to digital transmission for advantages offered by Digital techniques like better quality of reception and spectrum efficiency. DD also followed these developments and considered adopting the latest technologies as they were more efficient and were capable of providing multiple services in comparison to traditional television broadcasting.

For deciding the standard for Digital Terrestrial Television Broadcasting, a Core group comprising of representatives from various Govt. Organizations/ Broadcasters/ Industries/ Research Institutions was constituted in November 1998. The Core group had after extensive deliberations unanimously recommended the DVB-T system for implementation in India.

Accordingly, as per the sanctions issued by the Government in 1999 for carrying the Pilot for DTT Transmission at four metro cities, DTT transmitters were setup and Pilot Transmission of DTT services was started in four metro cities in 2003.

Later in 2006, realizing the importance and urgent need of addressing the issue of switching from analogue to digital transmission, Government of India constituted an Expert Group under the chairmanship of Member Secretary, Planning Commission with members from Ministry of I&B, Broadcasting Industry, Entertainment Electronics Manufacturing association and domain experts.

The Mandate provided to this Sub-Group was to prepare a road map for 'Going Digital' keeping in line with international standards. The committee met on 05.04.2006 and 10.10.2006 and discussed various issues related to 4 major stake holders viz. Prasar Bharati, Private Broadcasters, MSO & Cable Service Providers and Industry.

Some of the major recommendations of Sub-Group committee in respect of Terrestrial Broadcast of Prasar Bharati were as follows:

Testing, publication and adoption of technical standard for digital terrestrial transmission.

Prasar Bharati's roll out of transmission conversion from analogue terrestrial to digital terrestrial both for Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD).

Commencement of digital terrestrial broadcast by Prasar Bharati in phases. Nationwide switch off of analogue broadcast both for terrestrial and C & S homes.

Accordingly, Prasar Bharati/DD proposed setting up of total 630 Digital Terrestrial Transmitters (HPTs-230 and LPTs-400) against 1401 analogue transmitters. Out of these 40 nos. DTT transmitters were sanctioned in 11th Plan and 23 nos. DTT transmitters were sanctioned in 12th Plan. Although DD had initially adopted the DVB-T standard for its pilot projects, it later adopted the latest second generation of DVB standard i.e. DVB-T2 for DTT transmission.

Doordarshan commissioned 23 digital terrestrial transmitters in 19 cities as approved by Government under 11th & 12th plan schemes. Out of 19 cities, 15 cities have one DTT transmitter and remaining 4 cities viz. Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai have two DTT transmitters. Also, the tender for 44 DTT HPTs which were approved under 12th Plan scheme was also initiated by Engineering Purchase wing of DG: DD, however later on the tender was cancelled.

Five DD Channels and Three Radio channels were available on DTT platform at all 19 locations and additional three DD Channels (including DD National in HD) on 2nd multiplex in 4 metro cities.

Ministry of I&B vide letter dt 19.12.2018 conveyed Minutes of the EFC Meeting for the 3 year action plan (BIND) wherein at para 14(ii) it was stated that any further expansion of Digital Terrestrial Transmission by DD should be undertaken only after finalization of a viable policy on Digital Terrestrial TV, identification of areas where such transmissions will be continued and choice of appropriate technologies.

In line with Ministry's directive for further expansion after a review, Prasar Bharati has entered into an MoU with IIT Kanpur to develop a "Direct to Mobile" (DTM) roadmap for Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting consistent with emerging standards such as 5G Broadcast. As per outcome of PoC, the roadmap for DTM could further become basis for mandatory provisions for Direct to Mobile Public Broadcasting.

Further expansions would also depend on availability/allocations of required UHF Spectrum and the funds allocations in coming years.

Meanwhile, in view of very Low viewership of DTT by viewers/ public in the country, Prasar Bharati Management committee approved the closure of all 23 DTTs spread over 19 cities across the country and by DG:DD Order no..

3(2)1/Doordarshan ATTS2020/e-ii dated 31/10/2022 all DTTs have been shut down w.e.f. 31/10/2022”.

52. On being asked the reasons for shortage of staff against the sanctioned strength in Doordarshan Kendras, especially in Kolkata DDK, where 408 posts are vacant against the sanctioned strength of 648 and in Dibrugarh DDK, 113 posts are vacant against the sanctioned strength of 187 among others, the Ministry submitted:-

“With change in technology, introduction of alternative platforms, etc. manpower requirement has changed with passage of time. One such change, amongst other changes, is closure of Analogue Terrestrial transmitters at DDK Kolkata (3 nos.) and DDK Dibrugarh (1 no.).

In Doordarshan Kendras, there is shortage of staff in programme, engineering, and administrative cadres. Promotions till recent times in programme/engineering cadre and departmental exams for promotion in administrative cadre could not take place mostly due to pending court cases. Apart from this, filling up of the posts earmarked through direct recruitment has also stopped due to dissociation of UPSC and SSC in respect of Prasar Bharati being an Autonomous body.

The process of rationalization of staff as per the recommendations of Manpower Audit (MPA) report is under consideration. Further, the Sam Pitroda Committee in its report had recommended for Manpower Audit of Prasar Bharati. The Manpower Audit of Prasar Bharati was undertaken by M/s Ernst & Young LLP (E&Y). Manpower Audit recommendations envisage revised strength considering obsolete technologies, automation, IT Enablement, and outsourcing of non-core Activities. The manpower model recommended by Manpower Audit has increased focus on:

- Outsourcing of non-core Engineering activities to third party by having FTE driven contracts. Outsourcing of key non-core administration activities like drivers, security, assistants, by bringing in automation platforms like e-office.
- Hiring of specialists on contract for new roles required by Prasar Bharati in line with the proposed structural change.
- Building an effective mix of full time and contractual manpower.
- Due to emergence of new broadcast technologies and modernization, several extant roles have become redundant. The revised staffing requirements

for all stations are determined based on the same as recommended by the Manpower Audit”.

53. Enumerating other challenges being faced by DD Kendras in Human Resource planning and their management, the following was submitted:-

- “1. Average age of the organization staff is around 56 years.
2. The existing staff strength in Akashvani is short in number with respect to handling the various functions smoothly.
3. Officials are regularly retiring on superannuation and since there is no fresh recruitment, therefore young talent is not available.
4. Though there is overall shortage of manpower, Prasar Bharati is managing its activities by re-deploying available manpower from the activities made redundant/outdated due to technological development in media landscape. The need is also being addressed by hiring persons on assignment basis for assisting in production and day-to-day work of the Kendra.
5. The Manpower Audit of Prasar Bharati has found key gaps in Prasar Bharati's existing manpower mix and skill capabilities due to changes in technology, I.T. enablement and automation. The Manpower Audit has recommended several steps to phase out obsolete technologies and unviable services, automate and IT enable key operations and to outsource non- core activities so as to bring the man power requirements in line with global best practices in Public Broadcasting.
6. Extreme shortage of Programme personnel, CCW officers and SAG & HAG level officers in the network.”

54. While submitting the various measures taken by the Ministry to fill the vacancies, the following was put forth:-

- “• Prasar Bharati Recruitment Board has been constituted on 01.07.2020 in accordance with Ministry of Information & Broadcasting notification dated 12.02.2020 for vacancies carrying scale of pay less than that of a Joint Secretary to the Government of India. The process of recruitment to fill up the backlog vacancies for physically impaired persons has been initiated by the Board.
- Before establishment of Prasar Bharati Recruitment Board, limited recruitment has been undertaken as a special dispensation through Staff Selection Commission for Critical Group ‘B’ and Group ‘C’ vacancies, approved

by the Government on an All India basis in 2013. As a result, 1358 officers have finally joined in various States.

- As regards filling up of the vacancies by promotion, continued efforts have been made by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and Prasar Bharati in accordance with extant instructions of DoPT. Promotions are an ongoing process and every effort is made to fill up the posts by promotion expeditiously.

To tide over the acute shortage, PB is engaging professionals in various categories under Contractual Engagement Policy (CEP 2021) on short-term contracts to meet its urgent requirement of skilled and professional manpower.”

55. During evidence, while dwelling upon the achievements of MIB during the year 2024-25, the representatives of the Ministry submitted:-

- a) Complete integration of Broadcast Seva Portal with portals of stakeholder Ministries for Ease of doing Business and speedy clearances. Integration with MHA, DOS and DOT has been done.
- b) Setting Activities for enhancing India's Soft Power - Engagement with Indian Missions in different countries to promote Indian content.
- c) Start initial activities for setting up National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) in AVGC Sector - Cabinet approval for NCoE received. Process underway to set up temporary Campus. Land allotted for Permanent Campus.”

56. When asked to furnish details regarding action taken by the Ministry on all recommendations of Sub-Group Committee in respect of Terrestrial Broadcast of Prasar Bharati, the Ministry provided the following information:-

- “In view of emerging trends in Broadcasting and availability of DD FreeDish, a free-to-air Direct to Home (DTH) Service of Prasar Bharati in the country (multiple TV and Radio channels free of cost without any monthly subscription fee), the Analog Terrestrial TV (ATT) Transmitters carrying only one channel had lost their relevance.
- An Inter Disciplinary Committee (IDC) was set up in 2017 to review the continuation of Analog Terrestrial Transmitters (ATT) of Doordarshan. As per recommendation of IDC and approval of Prasar Bharati Board, the obsolete ATTs have been phased out. More than 1300 DD ATTs have been closed in phased manner barring around 59 ATTs in strategic locations which would continue to be in operation. The rationalization of these obsolete terrestrial transmitters has no bearing on content generation by DD Kendras across the country. The programme production at various Doordarshan Kendras would continue as it is.
- Prasar Bharati is operating DD Free Dish, a multi-channel Free-To-Air Direct to Home (DTH) service. This service was launched in December, 2004 and presently

has the capacity of 116 TV channels , 48 Radio channels alongwith 265 co-branded educational channels. As per the market estimation, DD Free Dish is watched in an estimated 45 million households. This is free to air DTH platform, for which the viewers do not have to pay monthly charges/subscription fee, as in the case of cable TV and Pay DTH. Its signals can be received anywhere in the country {except A&N Inland}, with the help of small sized low cost dish receive units. {For A&N Island, special 10 channel C-Band DTH service is in operation}

- Since all the DD channels and other private channels of different genres are available through "DD FreeDish" to the viewers; it provides better alternative with a variety of channels of different genres including Educational Channels to the viewers, as there are more than 45 million households with set top boxes of this free to air DTH service.
- In addition to "DD Free Dish", DD Channels are also must carry channels for Cable & other private DTH Operators in India. Additionally, content of "DD channels" are being made available on demand through YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and other digital platforms for access anywhere in the world.
- As regards Migration towards Digital Terrestrial TV, it has been envisioned that any further expansion of Digital Terrestrial Transmission by Doordarshan should be undertaken only after finalization of a viable policy on Digital Terrestrial TV, identification of areas where such transmission will be continued and choice of appropriate technology. In this line, Prasar Bharati has signed an MoU with IIT Kanpur for collaborative activities in various areas. Proof of Concept (PoC) for Next Generation Technology- Direct to Mobile Broadcasting (D2M) was carried out by IIT Kanpur in Bengaluru and Delhi."

(b) All India Radio (AIR)

57. When asked about the total funds allocated to Prasar Bharati and for AIR in particular, for the year 2024-25, the Ministry provided the following details:-

Central Sector Scheme (BIND)	
Grant received under BIND Scheme	Rs. 500.00 crore
Funds allocated for AIR	Rs. 145.02 crore
Other Central Expenditure	Rs. 2509.94 crore
Funds allocated for AIR	Rs. 1455.75 crore

58. The BE, RE and AE from 2020-21, under AIR, are as follows:-

AIR						(Rs. in crore)	
year	BE	RE	AE	AE % w.r.t BE	AE % w.r.t RE		
2020-21	132.00	58.72	57.22	43.35%	97.45%		
2021-22	140.05	60.68	60.26	43.03%	99.31%		

2022-23	160.51	71.69	63.06	39.29%	87.96%
2023-24	78.88	42.38	30.48*	38.64%	71.92%
2024-25	145.02	115.32 [#]	4.88 ^{\$}	3.37%	4.23%

*Provisional

#Expenditure upto august 2024

\$Proposed

59. According to the Ministry, Akashvani has 591 stations spread all over India comprising 230 stations with studio facilities for production of programme locally and 361 Relay Stations. Total 754 transmitters are operational from these stations comprising 625 FM transmitters, 122 MW transmitters and 7 SW Transmitters which are providing terrestrial coverage to about 90.0% area and about 98% population of the country. In addition to terrestrial transmission, 48 channels of Akashvani are available on Doordarshan DTH platform (DD Free Dish) which can be received throughout the country except Andaman & Nicobar Islands by using set top box. Additionally, more than 260 Akashvani channels can be received through “NewsonAIR” app on mobile phones.

60. Regarding digitalization of Studios, it has been submitted that:-

“Most of the Studio of All India Radio Stations have been digitized and rest of the studios is being digitized in the plan 2021-26.”

61. On being asked to furnish the shortcomings of AIR and the grievances of the AIR employees, the Ministry inter-alia has submitted that:-

“Akashvani is facing acute shortage of Staff in all its cadres and wings. Attempt is being made to overcome the same to some extent by engaging officials on short term contract basis.

Grievance Redressal and Access Mechanism have been functioning in accordance with the guidelines of Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievance and monitored through the Centralized Public Grievances Redressal and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS).

Public grievances and pension redressal petitions are being attended to promptly and disposed of at the earliest. In this regard an SOP on 27/05/2021 is issued to handle the grievances on CPGRAMS Portal.

Grievance redressal status reports on disposal of Grievances are submitted to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting as and when Ministry of I & B asked. ATRs/ replies sent to petitioners are also uploaded on the CPGRAMS Portal”.

62. Regarding the status of the grievances, the following was submitted:-

“The status report of grievances received on CPGRAMS Portal during the period 01.01.2024 to 09.10.2024 in respect of CGRCell, Prasar Bharati Secretariat is given below in tabular form:

Description	No. of Grievances
Grievances Brought Forward (As on 01.01.2024)	50
Grievance Received (During 01-01-2024to 09-10-2024)	824
Total	874
Disposed off	821
Pending as on 09.10.2024	53

Out of 53 grievances pending on CPGRAMS Portal there are 18 numbers of grievances pertain to Akashvani Directorate for their redressal and disposal”.

63. Detailing the problems witnessed in AIR and steps taken to overcome them during the year 2023-24 alongwith the tangible outcome of the measures taken to address the challenges/ hindrances encountered in AIR, the Ministry has submitted that:-

“Most of the broadcast equipment are imported with no production in India. Make – in –India (MII) clause exemptions are to be taken for each project in regard to Broadcast Equipment. This procedure takes considerable time. Matter is being pursued in the Ministry on day to day basis. Further, there has been some delay in supply of equipment due to chip shortage. Man power shortage was also one of the reason for the late completion of projects.

It is the constant endeavor of Akashvani to complete the projects within the specified time frame. Monitoring mechanism has been strengthened considerably. Procurement procedures have been streamlined. Project review meetings are held regularly at Zonal level & HQ level and various activities involved in procurement of capital equipment and execution of works are critically assessed & targets are fixed. The frequency of monitoring meetings has been increased at all levels of Directorate & Prasar Bharati Sectt. Use of digital platform viz e-office, e-tendering, procurement through GEM, Video conference is also being utilized.

In addition to above, a dedicated IPMC (Integrated Project Monitoring Cell) has been created under the chairmanship of CEO (PB) to monitor the progress of projects and improvement in their implementation”.

(c) Human resource in Prasar Bharati

64. During previous DFG (2022-23), the status of vacancies in All India Radio and Doordarshan was observed as follows:-

Units	Sanctioned Strength	In-position	Vacant
All India Radio	26,129	12,163	13,966
Doordarshan	19,662 (excluding 2,038 posts which were abolished under ADRP's 2002 to 2008-09)	7,242	12,420
Total	45,791	19,405	26,386

65. When asked about the current status of vacancies in All India Radio and Doordarshan, the Ministry furnished the following information:-

Units	Sanctioned Strength	In-position	Vacant
All India Radio	26,129	10,265	15,864
Doordarshan	19,662 (excluding 2,038 posts which were abolished under ADRP's 2002 to 2008-09)	5,954	13,708
Total	45,791	16219	29,572

66. The Committee observed that the number of vacant posts in AIR had increased from 13,966 to 15864 and in DD number of vacant posts had increased from 12420 to 13708. When asked to explain the reasons for this increase in vacant posts in DD and the plans to address the persistent problem of human resource in both AIR and Doordarshan, the CEO Prasar Bharati, during evidence submitted as under:-

“सर, जो स्टाफ शॉर्टेज का मुद्दा है, यह बड़ा लॉन्ग स्टैंडिंग इश्यू है। आप ध्यान करें कि वर्ष 1997 में जब प्रसार भारती का गठन हुआ था तो आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन के कुल सैंक्शंड पद लगभग 46 हजार थे। उनमें से लगभग दो तिहाई पद भरे थे, एक तिहाई खाली थे। हमें जो एक्चुअल ट्रांसफर हुए थे, वे लगभग 30 हजार थे। वर्ष 1997 से लेकर अभी तक की अवधि में उसमें से भी लगभग आधे लोग रिटायर हो चुके हैं। जो ओरिजिनल दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी के एम्प्लॉई ट्रांसफर हुए थे, उनमें से लगभग 16 हजार लोग हमारे यहां पर कार्यरत हैं। इसके अलावा जो गवर्नमेंट इम्प्लॉइज़ थे, जिन रूल्स के तहत उनका रिक्रूटमेंट हुआ था, उन रूल को मोडिफाईड करके प्रसार भारती के लिए अपनी एक विस्तृत मेनपावर पॉलिसी बनाए जाने का काम किया जाना था, जो कि ब्रिक्स एंड पीसीज़ में हुआ लेकिन उसके ऊपर एक समग्र व्यू नहीं लिया जा सका। इसी कारण से बीच-बीच में 2007 में 2012-13 में कुछ रिक्रूटमेंट्स हुए, लगभग दो हजार लोगों की भर्ती की गयी थी, लेकिन एक समग्र नीति न होने के कारण जो हमारी वेकेंसीज आ रही थीं, उन वेकेंसीज को एड्रेस करना संभव नहीं हो पा रहा था। 2020 में एक मेनपावर ऑडिट की कार्यवाही की गयी थी, जिसकी रिपोर्ट के हिसाब से, जिसकी रिपोर्ट फरवरी, 2020 में सबमिट हुई थी और उसको बोर्ड के

समक्ष प्रस्तुत किया गया था, लेकिन उसके एक महीने बाद ही कोविड महामारी के कारण लगभग 7-8 महीने लॉक डाउन रहा, उसके बाद अगले वर्ष में लॉक डाउन रहा तो उसका क्रियान्वयन प्रभावित हुआ। अभी हमने पिछले साल अगस्त में हमारी ऑडिट की जितनी फाइंडिंग्स थीं, उनके आधार पर हमने एक विस्तृत रोडमैप तैयार करने का एक कार्यक्रम शुरू किया है और उसमें अब हमारे यूनिटवाइज़ और वर्टिकलवाइज़ हमको कितने-कितने लोग लेने हैं। और किस प्रकार से हम जो एगजिस्टिंग काडर्स हैं, उनका हम पूरा रेश्रलाइजेशन करके एक नई नीति तैयार कर रहे हैं। यह काम लगभग तीन से चार महीने के भीतर पूरा हो जाना चाहिए जिसके बाद नये रूल्स के नोटिफिकेशन के बाद हम लोग अपनी आवश्यकतानुसार रिक्लूटमेंट्स आरंभ कर सकेंगे। हालांकि इस पीरियड में कुछ एक्सपर्टीज़ फील्ड हैं, जैसे प्रोग्राम काडर है, उसमें लोगों की भारी शोर्टेज हो गयी थी, इसलिए कॉन्ट्रैक्चुअल स्टाफ के माध्यम से हमारे दो से ढाई हजार के करीब लोग हैं, जिन्हें हमने देश भर में विभिन्न सेंटर्स में कॉन्ट्रैक्ट पर रखा हुआ है और अभी तात्कालिक आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति करने के लिए पिछले एक साल में हमने 300-400 लोगों को दूरदर्शन न्यूज़ में और आकाशवाणी में कॉन्ट्रैक्ट के माध्यम से रिक्लूट करना आरंभ किया है। हमारे दूरदर्शन केन्द्र जहां नॉन न्यूज़ प्रोग्रामिंग हो रही है, उसमें वर्तमान में हमने एनआईए जारी करके कॉन्ट्रैक्ट के माध्यम से 800 लोगों की और भर्ती की प्रक्रिया आरंभ की है। पुराने आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन के जो डिम्ड डेप्यूटेशन के स्टाफ थे, उनकी सैलरी का पैसा हमें सरकार से ग्रांट के तौर पर मिलता है, जो कि लगभग 2500 करोड़ रुपये के आस-पास अभी वर्तमान में है। जैसे-जैसे यह स्टाफ रिटायर होते जाएंगे तो इस राशि में कमी होती जाएगी और जो लोग इनको रिप्लेस करेंगे, वे प्रसार भारती के कर्मचारी होने के नाते उनके वेतन भत्तों का जो भी भार होगा, वह प्रसार भारती को अपने संसाधनों से ही जुटाना होगा।”

67. On being asked to furnish the updated status of pending cases and also outline the measures envisaged by the Ministry in this regard, the Ministry replied that:-

“Details of Pending court cases pertaining to administrative issues are in **Annexure ‘B’**.”

68. Regarding the steps taken in respect of direct recruitment, which was earlier done by UPSC and SSC, the following inputs were furnished:-

“i. In pursuance of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Establishment of Recruitment Board Rules, 2020, notified by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in the Gazette of India Extraordinary dated 12.02.2020, ‘Prasar Bharati Recruitment Board’ (PBRB) has been constituted on 01.07.2020 for filling up of vacancies in Akashvani (All India Radio) and Doordarshan carrying scale of pay less than that of a Joint Secretary to the Government of India by Direct Recruitment /Departmental Competitive Examination/ Deputation, as per extant RRs.

ii. Further, with change in technology, introduction of alternative platforms, etc., manpower requirement has changed with the passage of time. To assess the optimal number of posts in various streams and levels as per the current and future requirement of the Organization, the exercise for HR Transformation is underway. On conclusion and acceptance of the recommendations of this exercise, a clear picture on the vacancies to be filled will emerge and, accordingly, appropriate action will be taken.

iii. Continued efforts are being made by the Ministry and Prasar Bharati in accordance with the extant instructions of DoPT and vacancies are being filled by timely promotion.

iv. To overcome shortage of staff in engineering cadre, this Ministry in consultation with Prasar Bharati recently granted one time relaxation and diverted the existing 360 vacant posts of AD(E)/JTS of IB(E)S of DR quota temporarily for promotion of diploma equivalent qualified AEs for the vacancy year 2023 and 2024. Prasar Bharati on 17/02/2024 & 21.10.2024 issued promotion orders in the JTS Grade.

v. However, to tide over the acute shortage, Prasar Bharati is engaging professionals in various categories under the Contractual Engagement Policy (CEP 2021) on short-term contract to meet its urgent requirement of skilled and professional manpower.”

69. While submitting the updated status of the action taken by the Ministry on the solution provided by IIT Kanpur on interference issues and deterioration of mobile services, heating up of devices, device ecosystem feasibility etc., it was stated as under:-

- “Prasar Bharati has entered into an MoU with IIT Kanpur on 11.07.2019 to develop Next Generation Broadcast solution/ roadmap for Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting consistent with emerging standards.
- IIT Kanpur alongwith its Technology partner for this R&D/Innovative Project, M/s. Sankhya Lab, has completed small scale PoC/ trials on D2M Next Gen Broadcasting in Bengaluru.
- After completion of small scale PoC in Bengaluru, a Conclave on “Direct to Mobile (D2M) Broadcast & 5G Broadband- Convergence Roadmap for India” was organized by IIT Kanpur, on 1st June 2022 in New Delhi. In this conclave IIT-K officially announced success of Proof-of-Concept (PoC) for Next Gen Direct-to-Mobile (D2M) Broadcasting along with emerging 5G standards and live demonstration of this technology was presented. Also a white Paper on “D2M Broadcast & 5G Broadband convergence Road for India- Summary & Recommendations” was released during inaugural session of the conclave. Various related issues including Policy support requirements etc. are covered in the white paper. The white Paper also proposed a large scale hybrid trial (involving HPHT and LPLT) in Delhi.
- The Hybrid PoC (involving HPHT & LPLT) in Delhi using one of the TV Transmitter at Pitampura (New Delhi) and several LPLTs was initiated. IIT Kanpur team identified around seven locations for installing the BRH for the LPLT network to work in conjunction with PB's High Power Transmitter at Pitampura to provide seamless D2M transmission around Kartavya path.

- After successful field trials in Bengaluru and Delhi, IIT Kanpur submitted its Report on Proof of Concept (PoC) in Feb' 2024 with certain recommendations and the same has been submitted by Prasar Bharati to Ministry of I&B.
- This Ministry is undertaking Inter-Ministerial consultations with various related Ministries and has now submitted a Note to Cabinet Secretariat for consideration of the proposal in a Committee of Secretaries.”

70. On being asked as to what steps were taken to address the requirement of manpower for assisting in production and day-to-day work of the Kendra, the Ministry replied that:-

“ Due to continuous retirement in various cadres under Doordarshan and AIR in Prasar Bharati and lack of fresh recruitment, there is a deficiency of skilled, professional and young manpower, which is backbone of any organization.

Talent Management & Specialised Outsourcing (TM&SO) division in PBS is mandated to meet the urgent need based requirement of skilled and professional manpower. Prasar Bharati is engaging professionals in various categories under Contractual Engagement Policy (CEP 2021) on a short term contracts ranging from 1 year to 3 years. These contracts are being renewed on yearly basis based on the requirement of organization in that skill set at a station and performance of contractual engaged.

As a stopgap arrangement, the need for manpower being addressed by hiring persons on assignment basis for assisting in production and day-to-day work of the Kendra”.

71. The Ministry was further asked if the manpower was sufficient to cater to the needs of DD Channels throughout the country and if not, why the vacancies were still not filled up even after so many years. Responding to this, the Ministry has submitted that:-

“To cater the emergent need of DD Channels last recruitment at subordinate level (engineering and programme) was done in 2015. Presently there is shortage of programme manpower under supervisory level and management level. On the basis of ongoing HR Transformation exercise, an assessment of required manpower is in process. Based on final assessment, the manpower shall be engaged by way of Recruitment or outsourcing of activities as per recommendations of the said exercise.

It is worth mentioning that there is acute shortage of staff in Programme and Admin cadres of Prasar Bharati. Similar situation will shortly arise in Engineering cadre as well.

The financial condition of Prasar Bharati is not conducive to fill up all or substantial number of vacant posts through recruitment of skilled professional

young manpower. In this regard, in a letter dated 29.09.2022, Prasar Bharati had written to the Ministry of I&B to provide a lumpsum annual grant of at least Rs. 1999 Cr. to Prasar Bharati as a compensation for rendering a host of pro bono services to the Government for dissemination of its policies and programmes through AIR and Doordarshan. This support would be in line with the worldwide trend of support to public broadcasters by the respective Governments.

However, in the meanwhile, PB is engaging professionals in various categories under Contractual Engagement Policy (CEP 2021) on short-term contracts to meet its urgent requirement of skilled and professional manpower.

Continued efforts have been made by the MIB and Prasar Bharati in accordance with the extant instructions of DoPT to fill up vacancies by promotion.

In case the Govt. assures financial support as has been requested vide letter dated 29.09.2022 mentioned above, recruitment process can be initiated, initially for critical posts and subsequently for other posts.”

72. It was also added that:-

“In light of the recommendations of the Manpower Audit Exercise, and subsequent changes in the Prasar Bharati Network/Services/ Manpower, Prasar Bharati has, with the approval of Prasar Bharati Board, hired an agency for providing consultancy services for HR Transformation of Prasar Bharati. This exercise is being done in two phases. The first phase is currently underway. Some of the key changes proposed in the ongoing HR Transformation exercise pertain to:

- (a) Strengthening of programme
- (b) Focus on programme roles including strategy, cross pollination, sourcing etc.
- (c) Strengthening of Sales and Marketing across tiers
- (d) Each channel/station Head to have cost and revenue accountability
- (e) Decentralised support functions; HR, Admin, Legal
- (f) Forward looking functions-planning and strategy, cyber security and Governance
- (g) Enhanced focus on OTT and DTH
- (h) Outsourcing of non-core Engineering/selected core engineering activities to 3rd Party by having FTE driven contracts
- (i) Outsourcing of key non-core Administration activities like drivers, security, Assistants by bringing in automation platforms like e-office”.

73. On being asked as to how many stations of DD throughout the country were being run sub-optimally without engineers and programming staff, the Ministry replied as under:-

“DD setups are utilizing the available resources (manpower) optimally. On the basis of ongoing HR Transformation exercise, an assessment of required manpower is in process. Based on final assessment, the manpower shall be engaged by way of Recruitment or outsourcing of activities as per recommendations of the said exercise”.

(ii) Supporting Community Radio Movement in India

74. Community Radio is an important third tier in radio broadcasting, distinct from Public Service Radio broadcasting and Commercial Radio. Community Radio Stations (CRSs) are low-power radio stations, which are meant to be set up and operated by local communities. In December 2002, the Government of India approved a policy for the grant of licenses, for setting up Community Radio Stations, to well established educational institutions. The Policy Guidelines were amended, in 2006, permitting community-based Organisations such as ICAR institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, registered societies public charitable trusts, etc. to own and operate Community Radio Stations, to allow greater participation on in issues relating to development and social change. The Policy Guidelines were further amended in 2017, 2018, 2022 and 2024 to promote the growth of the Community Radio sector. The policy guidelines for Community Radio and the list of CRSs currently in operation can be accessed from the website of the Ministry at www.mib.gov.in. The Community Radio provides a platform to air local voices among the local community on issues concerning Health, Nutrition, Education, Agriculture etc. Moreover, the Community Radio is a powerful medium for the marginalized sections of society to voice their concerns. Community Radio also has the potential to strengthen people’s participation in development programmes through its holistic approach. In a country like India, where every state has its own language and distinctive cultural identity, CRSs are also a repository of local folk music and cultural heritage. The unique position of CRS as an instrument of positive social change makes it an ideal tool for community empowerment. To support the Community Radio movement, a Central Sector Scheme namely “Supporting Community Radio Movement in India” is being implemented.

75. The BE, RE and actual expenditure for the last four years and BE for the year 2024-25 for supporting Community Radio movement in India as furnished by the Ministry are :-

Supporting Community Radio Movement in India					(₹ In crore)	
Year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t. BE	% w.r.t. RE	

2020-21	4.50	2.12	1.97	43.78	92.92
2021-22	3.84	2.50	1.92	50.00	76.80
2022-23	3.84	3.00	2.00	52.08	66.66
2023-24	5.00	5.00	4.24	84.80	84.80
2024-25	5.00	-	-	-	-

76. According to the Ministry, at present there are 513 Community Radio Stations (CRSs) in India. As per the information available with the Ministry, all 513 CRSs were functional. Out of 513 CRS, a total of 499 CRS were having valid Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA). The GOPA of remaining CRS were in the process of renewal/extension.

77. Responding to a query regarding the number of applications for Community Radios Station license that were pending with the Ministry, the following information was provided:-

“A total of 29 applications for Community Radios Station are pending with the Ministry, which are at various stages of processing for grant of permission for setting up of Community Radio Station”.

78. Further, when asked for the details of the applications that were received during 2023-24, the Ministry replied as under:-

“A total of 113 applications were received during 2023-24 seeking permission for setting up of Community Radio Stations. During the Year 2023-24, a total of 52 Letters of intent, giving permission to apply for grant of License for running CRS was issued. A total of 35 applications were rejected due to non-meeting the eligibility criterion or due to clearances not given by the concerned Departments/ Ministries (As per the extant guidelines, the applications are required to be cleared from MHA, Ministry of Defence(MOD) and Ministry of Communications). A total of 67 Community Radio Stations were commissioned during the FY 2023-24.(It is pertinent to mention that after obtaining LOI, applicant applies to Ministry of Communication for Wireless Operating License before commissioning the CRS. The License for operating CRS is issued by the Ministry of Communication)”.

79. Elaborating on the steps taken to strengthen the Community Radio Movement in the Country alongwith the road map for the year 2024-25, the Ministry submitted:-

“The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has taken several steps for strengthening the Community Radio Sector. The amount of financial assistance given to a Community Radio Station has been increased from Rs. 10 Lakhs to an amount varying from Rs. 15.40 Lakhs to Rs. 24 Lakhs (Depending upon various crieterian). Special provisions have been kept

incentivizing CRS to use Green Energy and women participation. In addition to this, to facilitate research, innovation and skilling in the sector, the Government of India has launched fellowship programmes and internship programmes under the Scheme.

The following activities have been planned during the FY 2024-25 for the Sector:-

- Organising National Community Radio Sammelan
- Launch of CRS Fellowship
- Offering Internship in Community Radio Stations.
- Organising 5 community radio workshops in community radio dark areas
- Organizing 4 regional Sammelans
- Capacity building workshops through Indian institute of mass communication (IIMC).
- Study/ Survey for assessing reach and effectiveness for community radio Stations”.

80. The details of CRSs in India (State/UT wise), as provided by the Ministry is as under:-

Sr.No.	Language	States	No. of CRS in the States
1.	Assamese	Assam	5
2.	Bengali	West Bengal	15
3.	Gujarati	Gujarat	15
4.	Hindi	North India	219
5.	Kashmiri	Jammu & Kashmir	11
6.	Kannada	Karnataka	26
7.	Malayalam	Kerala	23
8.	Marathi	Maharashtra	57
9.	Odia	Odisha	41
10.	Punjabi	Punjab	10
11.	Sanskrit	Karnataka (Shivamogga District)	1
12.	Tamil	Tamil Nadu	48
13.	Telugu	Andhra Pradesh, Telangana	21

14.	Urdu	Jammu & Kashmir, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh	83
15.	Sindhi	Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh	86
16.	Konkani	Goa	0
17.	Manipuri	Manipur	6
18.	Nepali	Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh	8
19.	Bodo	Assam and Meghalaya	7
20	Dogri	Jammu and Himachal Pradesh	8
21.	Maithili	Bihar and Jharkhand	19
22.	Santhali	West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha	62

81. While noting that no demand for financial assistance was received from CRS hailing from North Eastern Region, the Ministry were asked to furnish the status of the scheme in all the NER. To this, the Ministry has submitted:-

“The Central Sector Scheme (CSS) namely "Supporting Community Radio Movement in India" is being implemented in all the States including North Eastern Region, in accordance with its mandate. Further, efforts of the Ministry have been to increase the number of Community Radio Stations in the region.

Under the Scheme, there is a provision of providing financial assistance to new and existing Community Radio Stations, towards infrastructure set up and upgradation. In addition to it, community radio awareness workshops are organized, so that more and more community-based organizations become aware about the Policy of the Government and come forward for setting up of Community Radio Stations, in the larger public interest. Moreover, capacity building workshops / webinars are also organized so that these Community Radio Stations are able to broadcast community centric programmes.

In respect of North East Region (NER) including Sikkim, 8 new Community Radio Stations have started operations since the Scheme was re-introduced in November 2021. Out of these 08 new stations, 2 stations made a request to the Ministry for obtaining financial assistance under the Scheme and the same was

provided to them. So far, a total of 10 webinars, 04 community radio awareness workshops and 01 capacity building workshop have been organized since November 2021. A special capacity building workshop was organised in Shillong, Meghalaya in 2024 in collaboration with UNESCO and Akashwani to promote use of high-quality programs in indigenous languages. Representatives from all operational community radio stations in the North-East, Lol holders, civil society organisations, indigenous languages' experts, community members, community media experts were invited to the 2-day event. The United Nations is celebrating 2022-2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages to draw global attention on the critical situation of many indigenous languages and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for their preservation, revitalization and promotion.

At present, 19 Community Radio Stations are operating in the North Eastern States, out of which the State of Manipur and Assam have 6 and 5 Community Radio Stations respectively. The 500th CRS in the country set up in Aizwal, Mizoram was recently inaugurated by the Hon'ble Minister for I&B. The Ministry is giving special emphasis on holding awareness workshops in order to increase penetration of CRS in NER and has planned 2 community radio awareness workshops during the current FY 2024-2025 covering Community radio dark districts. Realizing the potential of CRS in NER, certain amendments have been made in the Scheme to encourage the potential organisations to establish CRSs. Additional financial support will now be given to women-led organisations who want to set up Community Radio Stations in the NER. Further, to encourage use of green energy in CRS, additional financial assistance will be given. The amount of financial assistance provided to new CRS has been increased from earlier grant of Rs. 12 lakh to Rs. 18.20- 24 lakh towards infrastructure”.

82. While providing the details of Community Radio Stations in NER run by women-led organisations and financial support extended to them till now alongwith the details of financial support provided by the Ministry to encourage use of green energy in CRS in NER as of now, the Ministry has submitted the following:-

“The Community Radio Station (CRS), run by the organization ‘Tarhuk Samaj’, Tolum Namchang Rakap Colony, Naharlagun, Papumpare District, Arunanchal Pradesh-791110, is women led CRS. The organization is having a total of 7 governing body members, out of which 4 members are women. An amount of Rs. 7.50 Lakhs were provided to the Organisation for replacement/ up gradation of equipments of CRS.

To encourage use of green energy in CRS, additional financial support is provided to CRSs. A CRS can install up to 4 KVA Solar Panel for running the CRS and apply for financial assistance. The details of financial support under the Central Sector Scheme are as follows:-

- (a) One time assistance amounting to Rs. 21 Lakhs is provided to newly Setup CRS in NER using green energy;
- (b) One time assistance amounting to Rs. 24 Lakhs is provided to newly Setup CRS having 50% of the GBM as women and using green energy;
- (c) Financial assistance for replacement and upgradation of Equipment including solar Panels is provided to Existing CRS, @90% of the expenditure subject to the upper limit of 11.10 Lakhs”.

83. On being asked about the functioning of CRS and the plan to establish CRS in all States/UTs, the Ministry replied as under:-

“As on 31.03.2024, there were a total of 494 commissioned Community Radio Stations (CRSs) in India. No CRS has been reported to be non-functional. At present, only 3 States/UT namely, the State of Goa, Lakshadweep (UT) and Dadar & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (UT), do not have any commissioned CRS. Recently, a letter of intent has been given to an organization willing to setup a CRS in the State of Goa.

As on 01.10.2024, there are a total of 513 Community Radio Stations in India. The Initial period for Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA) is for ten (10) years. The Grant of Permission Agreement can be extended for a period of five (5) years at a time. Extension of GOPA is granted on the basis of an application and verification of adherence to the terms and conditions of the permission. The application for extension is required to be submitted one year before the expiry of existing GOPA. As on 01.10.2024, GOPA of 499 CRS were valid and GOPA of 14 Community Radio Stations are in the process of its extension”.

84. Further, it was added that:-

“The Ministry organises Community Radio (CR) awareness workshops, especially covering CRS dark area, in order to increase awareness, amongst eligible organisations, about setting up of CRS and its benefit to the community. Recently, CR awareness workshops were held in Agartala, Jaipur and Goa. Two more workshops have been planned during the current FY 2024-25, one in Gangtok and the other in Ranchi covering the States having less number of CRS”.

VI. Internal and Extra Budgetary Resources (IEBR), Revenue generated and utilized

85. The details regarding IEBR of Ministry of I&B for the years 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 are as under:-

(Rs. in Crore)									
Description	BE 2020-21	RE 2020-21	BE 2021-22	RE 2021-22	BE 2022-23	RE 2022-23	BE 2023-24	RE 2023-24	BE 2024-25
(A) Autonomous Bodies	1506.38	1375.23	1328.28	1328.08	1394.75	1396.27	1492.44	1717.45	2017.97
(i) CFSI	0.85	0.10	0.30	0.22	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
(ii) FTII	4.50	4.00	5.50	4.00	5.50	5.50	5.70	5.70	6.25
(iii) SRFTI	4.10	3.73	3.92	3.42	3.50	3.96	4.31	3.89	3.97
(iv) IIMC	5.50	5.50	5.50	4.07	5.50	5.00	5.50	5.50	6.00
(v) PCI	1.74	1.74	1.59	2.37	0.00	1.81	1.93	2.36	1.75
(vi) Prasar Bharati *	1489.69	1360.16	1311.47	1314.00	1380.00	1380.00	1475.00	1700.00	2000.00
(B) Public Sector Enterprises	253.63	229.62	247.02	185.27	201.39	399.68	356.24	22.48	9.28
(i) NFDC	6.61	1.41	0.00	4.67	0.00	187.84	159.90	22.48	9.28
(ii) BECIL	247.02	228.21	247.02	180.60	201.39	211.84	196.34	-	-
Total (A) + (B)	1760.01	1604.85	1575.30	1513.35	1596.14	1795.25	1848.68	1739.93	2027.25

***Gross IEBR**

86. Statement of Gross Revenue Projections, net revenue earned and Net Expenditure during 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 as furnished by the Ministry are as follows:-

Statement of Net Revenue and Utilization of IEBR from 2020-21 onwards		
Figures in Rs. Crores		
Year	Net Revenue	IEBR Expenditure (Net)
2020-21	1298.90	1074.25
2021-22	1417.10	1202.56
2022-23	1380.23	1175.28
2023-24*	1996.56	1356.89
2024-25#	650.66	316.53
*Provisional #upto July, 24		

Prasar Bharati Board has accorded approval to its Annual accounts for the FY 2023-24 through the minutes published on 11.11.2024. Now, the accounts will be audited by CAG and it would be considered final only after completion of CAG Audit.

87. Responding to a query about the level of self sufficiency achieved by Prasar Bharati with GBS allocation and IEBR raised during the year 2023-24, the Ministry stated as under:-

“Prasar Bharati is meeting its operational expenses from its IEBR and has some surplus also. The revenue generated upto July 2024 is Rs 650.66 crore whereas Net operational expenses are Rs 316.53 crore. Further, Prasar Bharati is carrying various activities under Public Service broadcasting whose combined estimated cost that includes direct and opportunity cost. Broadly, Public Service Broadcasting includes non-monetisable broadcast, pro-bono content sharing/syndication, pro-bono carriage & distribution, unviable Public Services channels/services, pro-bono campaigns, non-commercial terrestrial broadcasting TV, non commercial terrestrial broadcasting radio (only MW & SW + non commercial FM relay) etc”.

88. Elaborating on the sufficiency of revenue, the CEO, Prasar Bharati, during evidence submitted as under:-

“दो वर्ष पहले प्रसार भारती की टोटल रेवेन्यू अपने रिसोर्सेस से होती थी जो प्रमुख रूप से तीन स्रोतों से आती थी, पहला फ्री डिश के स्लॉट का ऑक्शन होता है जिसमें लगभग 750 करोड़ रुपये के करीब रेवेन्यू थी। दूसरा, हमारे आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन के जो हमारे रेवेन्यू हैं जो कमर्शियल ऑपरेशंस हैं, जिसमें हमें एड्स मिलते हैं और तीसरा, हमारे इंप्रगस्ट्रक्चर को हम किसी तरह से मोनेटाइज कर सकते हैं, जैसे हमारे टावर्स पर हम निजी ऑपरेटर्स को भी रेडियो ट्रांसमीटर्स लगाने की इजाजत देते हैं। ऐसे ही टेलिकॉम कंपनियां हमारे टावर्स का प्रयोग करती हैं। मैं आपके ध्यान में लाना चाहूंगा कि पिछले दो वर्षों में हमारी फ्री डिश की जो रेवेन्यू थी, उसको हम लोगों ने ऑक्शन प्रोसेस को और स्ट्रीम लाइन करके 750 करोड़ रुपये बढ़ाकर इस साल 1100 करोड़ रुपये पहुंचा दिया है। दूसरा, आकाशवाणी और दूरदर्शन की रेवेन्यू लगभग 250 से 300 करोड़ रुपये के बीच में कमर्शियल रहती थी, वह इस साल हमारा प्रयास है कि उसको बढ़ाकर हम लगभग 500 से 600 करोड़ रुपये के आसपास ले जाएं और मोनेटाइजेशन की कार्यवाही है उसमें हमारे एगजिस्टिंग टावर्स और ट्रांसमीटर्स हैं, उनको किराये पर देने की अपेक्षा जो हमारे पास जो प्रोपर्टीज हैं, जो भी देश भर में विभिन्न स्थानों पर भूमि है, उस भूमि को हम किस तरह से मोनेटाइज करके उसका भी उपयोग रिसोर्सेस जुटाने के लिए कर सकें, इस संबंध में एक कमेटी ऑफ सेक्रेटरीज का नोट हमने मंत्रालय को प्रस्तुत कर दिया है और हमें उम्मीद है कि अगर हमें यह अनुमति मिल जाती है तो उसके आधार पर हम विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में कुछ और भी मोनेटाइजेशन कर सकेंगे।”

89. To a specific question as to what was done with the excess of IEBR generated which remains unutilized during 2023-24, the Ministry replied as under:-

“ Yes, Prasar Bharati generated excess revenue of approx. Rs.640.00 crore during the year 2023-24 over its operational expenditure. The same is being utilized in the current financial year for improving the content of Akashvani and Doordarshan and launch of OTT”.

90. On being asked whether any study had been conducted to assess the assets which were in idle state for a long time under Doordarshan Kendras in India, the Ministry replied as under:-

“No study has so far been conducted to assess the assets under Doordarshan Kendras in India. Prasar Bharati Board has approved a draft monetization plan including feasibility study of Prasar Bharati land assets (both Akashvani & Doordarshan).

The draft monetization plan mentions that:

1. Prasar Bharati will monetize land assets on PPP model without alienating the land.
2. The revenue generated will be used by Prasar Bharati making it sustainable”.

91. The Committee sought details of the last three meetings of Integrated Project Monitoring Cell (IPMC) and the details of projects monitored in the said-period and the improvements made in the implementations of projects. To this, the Ministry provided the following details:-

“The project review meetings at the Zonal & HQ level are being held regularly. The following meetings were held to review the progress of projects under BIND scheme 2021-26:

1. Detailed Zonal meetings under the Chairmanship of ADG (IPMC) were held in months of Jan 2024 and February 2024. Various Doordarshan and Akashvani projects envisaged under the BIND scheme 2021-26, in particular the projects under execution in financial year 2023-24 and planned projects of 2024-25, were deliberated during these meetings held on dates as under:

East Zone & North East Zone Akashvani projects	8th January, 2024
East Zone & North East Zone Doordarshan projects	9th January, 2024
North Zone Akashvani projects	10th January, 2024
North Zone Doordarshan projects	11th January, 2024
South Zone Akashvani projects	5th February, 2024
South Zone Doordarshan projects	6th February, 2024
West Zone Akashvani projects	7th February, 2024

2. Joint Zonal Meet of all four zones with senior officials of Doordarshan and Akashvani Directorate under the Chairmanship of CEO Prasar Bharati was held on 25.09.2024. Monitoring of progress in respect of various targeted projects being undertaken in BIND scheme 2021-26 for FY 2024-25, was carried out in the Meet. On ground status report in regard to the projects and difficulties being faced/ their solutions in execution of projects were deliberated among participants.

3. A meeting of Additional Director Generals (IPMC/P&D) of Doordarshan & Akashvani Directorate with ADG (BO) of all zones under the chairmanship of CEO Prasar Bharati was held on 04.10.2024 through video conference. The meeting was organized to review the outcome of earlier meetings and expedite the progress of ongoing projects in current financial year.”

92. Enumerating the highlights of the project review meetings of Prasar Bharati, the Ministry stated as under:

“1. Zonal Offices have been asked to complete the site acquisition for upcoming FM transmitter projects under BIND Scheme. New sites are required at 15 places, out of which sites at 12 places have been allotted through State Governments. Payment for sites is to be made by Zonal offices and site acquisition is to be completed.

2. Civil works for new buildings are to be taken up by Civil Construction Wing (CCW). Sanction for Rs 15 crore has been issued to CCW for new building works for early completion of works. In addition, building repair and renovation at 26 places through CCW has also been taken up by different Zonal Offices wherein sanction of approximately 12 crore has already been issued by Zonal Offices. CCW is being followed up by Zonal offices for early completion of work. CCW has been asked for submission of site layout plan and Civil estimates for new building works for acquired sites.

3. Tower work at 21 places under continuing scheme is being undertaken by Zonal Offices. Zonal Offices have been asked to complete the tower works at the earliest. Tower work for new sites is to be initiated by Zonal Offices at 22 places.

4. 20 kW FM Transmitter has been supplied at Bhuj and Jaisalmer. Zonal ADGs have been advised to complete Purchase of Zonal equipments and departmental works by December 2024 for these sites. Further, 7 FM

Transmitters of 10 kW each, would be supplied by the month of December 2024. Tender for 5kW FM and 1kW FM transmitters is also in advance stage. Zonal Offices have already been asked to complete purchase of Zonal equipment and departmental works for these sites.

5. Studio refurbishing, AC Plant replacement, Visual Radio, DG set replacement works to be expedited at the earliest for all the sites by respective Zonal Offices”.

VII. FILM SECTOR

93. All matters relating to the Films Sector viz. promoting production, dissemination and preservation of film content including organisation of International Film Festival of India (IFFI), other national and international film festivals, certification of films, granting film shooting permissions, holding of National Film Awards are handled by the Films Wing. In this regard, the vision of the Ministry is to create an enabling environment for sustained growth of the media and entertainment sector to effectively disseminate information on Government policies, programmes and achievements. The mission of the Ministry relating to the Films Sector is to promote and develop good and value based cinema for healthy entertainment of people of all ages and create a policy framework for achieving this; restore, digitalise, preserve, and enhance public access to the archival wealth of films, video and audio resources and promote good cinema and propagate film culture through film festivals and celebrations.

94. While examining this sector, the Committee sought to know the status of the Amendment Bill with respect to ‘The Cinematograph Act, 1952’. To this, the Ministry replied that:-

“The Cinematograph (Amendment) Act, 2023 (12 of 2023), an act further to amend the Cinematograph Act, 1952, got passed by the Parliament and received the assent of the Hon’ble President on 4th August, 2023.”

95. Elaborating on it, the Ministry furnished the following details:

“1. The Cinematograph (Amendment) Act, 2023 comprehensively addresses the issues relating to film certification, viz. punishment for unauthorised recording and exhibition of films to curb the menace of film piracy by transmission of unauthorized copies on the internet, improvement in the procedure for certification of films for public exhibition by the Central Board of Film Certification,

as well as improve categorisations of the certifications of the films, and harmonising the law with extant executive orders, Supreme Court judgements, and other relevant legislations.”

2. The amendments in the 2023 Act provide for:

a) Provisions to Check Unauthorised Recording and Exhibition of Films

Amounting to Piracy: To check film piracy by way of cam-cording in the theatres; and most importantly also prohibit any unauthorized copying and online transmission & exhibition of a pirated copy of any film, strict penal provisions have been incorporated.

b) Age-Based Certification: Introduction of age-based categories of certification by further sub-dividing the existing UA category into three age-based categories, viz. seven years (UA 7+), thirteen years (UA 13+), and sixteen years (UA 16+), instead of twelve years. These age-based markers would be only recommendatory, meant for the parents or guardians to consider whether their children should view such a film.

c) Aligning with the Supreme Court Judgements: Omission of Revisional Powers of Central Government as per judgment of Supreme Court in the case of K.M. Shankarappa vs Union of India (2000).

d) Perpetual Validity of Certificates: Removal of the restriction in the Act on validity of certificate for only 10 years for perpetual validity of certificates of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC).

e) Change of Category of Film for Television: Recertification of the edited film for Television broadcast, as only Unrestricted Public Exhibition category films can be shown on television.

f) Reference to Jammu and Kashmir: Omission of references to the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir in line with the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019”.

96. When the Committee asked about the implementation of 'Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines of Digital Media Ethics Code), Rules 2021' and details about the formation of self regulatory body (ies) for OTT platforms, the Ministry, in their written reply, submitted, that:-

Furnishing of Information	The Ministry released formats for furnishing information by the digital media publishers vide Public Notice dated 26 May, 2021. The Public Notice provided separate formats for standalone digital news publishers, digital arms of traditional (TV/print) news publishers, and OTT platforms. Reminders for furnishing of information were sent to digital media publishers in June 2021, and September 2021. About 3850 publishers have furnished information to the Ministry which includes 3781 digital news publishers and 69 OTT platforms.
Disclosure of information:	The format for monthly disclosure of grievances received addressed and redressed by the OTT platforms and self regulatory bodies has been issued by the Ministry vide Public Notice dated 09.09.2021. Further for ensuring regular disclosure of the platforms and transparency regarding the contact details of their Grievance Officers for the benefit of the public, the Ministry vide letter dated 27.02.2023 has communicated to the OTT platforms and self regulatory bodies to ensure strict compliance to the transparency and disclosure provisions of the Rules.
Registration of Self Regulatory Bodies (SRB):	<p>Ministry has registered 9 SRBs for Digital News Publishers and 02 SRBs for OTT platforms</p> <p>DIGITAL NEWS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indian Digital Publishers Content Grievance Council (Confederation of Online Media) 2. Web Journalists Standards Authority (Web Journalists Association of India) 3. Professional News Broadcasting Authority (NBA) 4. Media9 Digital Media Federation (MDMF) 5. DIGIPUBB News India Foundation a 6. Working Journalist Media Council 7. Registration of Digital Media Publishers& News Portal Grievance Council of India 8. Print and Digital Media Association' (PADMA) 9. Journalist and Media Association Grievance Council (JMAGC)

	<p>OTT PLATFORMS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Digital Publishers Content Grievance Council (IAMA) 2. Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC)
<p>Constitution of IDC</p>	<p>Inter Departmental Committee (IDC) has been constituted under the chairpersonship of the Authorised Officer, with members from the M/o Women & Child Development, M/o Law & Justice, M/o Home Affairs, M/o Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), M/o External Affairs, M/o Defence and domain experts. Representatives from Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Bar Council of India (BCI), and Press Council of India (PCI) have been included in the Committee as domain experts.</p>
<p>Action under Section 69A of the IT Act</p>	<p>The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 inter-alia enable the Central Government to issue directions for blocking of content in respect of grounds referred to under section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 “in the interest of the sovereignty or integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above”. An institutional mechanism of Nodal Officers has been established in the various Ministries/Departments and organizations of the Union Government, and the State/UT Governments for sending requests for blocking of content to the Ministry. Any person may send their complaint under section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 regarding blocking of content published by a digital</p>

	<p>news publisher or an OTT platform to the concerned Nodal Officer(s). The list of Nodal Officers, alongwith their contact details, is available on the website of the Ministry.</p>
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97. Replying to the query of the Committee about the measures taken/proposed to be taken to contain adult content being shown on the OTT platforms, the Ministry submitted:-

“The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 under the Information Technology Act, 2000, were notified by the Government on 25th February, 2021. Part III of the Rules relates to publishers of online curated content, commonly known as OTT platforms. The Rules inter-alia provide for a Code of Ethics to be adhered to by the OTT platforms and a three tier complaint-based mechanism for addressing grievances related to the violation of the Code of Ethics as under:

i. Level I: Publisher

ii. Level II: Self-Regulatory Bodies of publishers

iii. Level III: Oversight Mechanism by the Central Government

2. The Code of Ethics for OTT platforms provides for age based classification of content, based on the nature and type of content, into the following categories:

i. Online curated content which is suitable for children as well as people of all ages shall be classified as “U” rating;

ii. Online curated content which is suitable for persons aged 7 years and above, and can be viewed by a person under the age of 7 years with parental guidance, shall be classified as “U/A 7+” rating;

iii. Online curated content which is suitable for persons aged 13 years and above, and can be viewed by a person under the age of 13 years with parental guidance, shall be classified as “U/A 13+” rating;

iv. Online curated content which is suitable for persons aged 16 years and above, and can be viewed by a person under the age of 16 years with parental guidance, shall be classified as “U/A 16+” rating; and

v. Online curated content which is restricted to adults shall be classified as “A” rating.

3. The Code of Ethics further provides for age gating of content on OTT platforms, and provides as under:

i. An OTT platform making available content classified as U/A 13+ or higher shall ensure that access control mechanisms, including parental locks, are made available for such content.

ii. An OTT platform which makes available content classified as “A” shall implement a reliable age verification mechanism for viewership of such content.

iii. OTT platforms providing access to content which has an “A” rating shall take all efforts to restrict access to such content by a child through the implementation of appropriate access control measures.

4. 15 Writ Petitions have been filed in various High Courts challenging the maintainability of the IT Rules, 2021. All these Petitions have since been transferred to Delhi High Court for hearing vide Supreme vide order dated 22.03.2024

Further, Bombay High Court in order dated 14.08.2021 in Writ Petition (L.) NO.14172 of 2021 - Agij Promotion of Nineteenonea Media Pvt. Ltd. & Ors vs. UOI and in public interest litigation (L.) NO.14204 OF 2021 - Nikhil Mangesh Wagle vs. UOI has stayed the operation of sub-rules (1) and (3) of Rule 9 of the IT Rules, 2021, relating to the Code of Ethics and the Three Tier Grievance Redressal Mechanism.

5. Further, section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology Act, 2000 authorises the appropriate Government to issue notifications to the intermediaries to disable access to unlawful information, including obscene content. In March 2024, the Ministry has taken action to block 18 OTT platforms publishing obscene, and, in some instances, pornographic content. 19 websites, 10 apps (7 on Google Play Store, 3 on Apple App Store), and 57 social media accounts associated with these platforms were disabled for public access in India”.

(i) National Films Development Corporation (NFDC) - Merger of Four Media Units with NFDC

98. The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) Ltd. was set up by the Government of India in 1975 with the primary objective of planning, promoting and organizing an integrated and efficient development of the Indian Film Industry in accordance with the National Economic Policy and Objectives laid down by the Central Government from time to time. NFDC was re-incorporated in the year 1980 by merging the Film Finance Corporation (FFC) and Indian Motion Picture Export Corporation

(IMPEC) with NFDC. Since inception, NFDC had funded/produced films in more than 21 regional languages, many of which had earned wide acclaim and won National/International awards. Apart from production of films, NFDC also provides 360° integrated marketing solutions for Government Agencies and produces advertisements, documentaries, short films, TV series, web advertisements, radio series and thematic musical anthems.

99. As per the OM dated December 30, 2022, issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the activities of four erstwhile film Media units viz. Film Division (FD), Children Film Society of India (CFSI), Directorate of Film Festival (DFF) & National Film Archive of India (NFAI) have been merged in their entirety with the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). With effect from January 1, 2023, all the activities have been transferred to NFDC. Post-merger, NFDC continues to carry out the activities of the erstwhile film media units uninterrupted. According to the Ministry, the merger has proved to be a strategic tool to achieve various objectives, including growth, efficiency and improvements, by combining the resources, operations, and expertise.

100. Submitting the detailed status of merger of the aforesaid four film media units, the Ministry stated as under:-

“Consequent to the decision taken by the Union Cabinet on 23.12.2020 for merger of four Film Media Units of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting viz. Films Division (FD), Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF), National Film Archive of India (NFAI) and Children’s Film Society, India (CFSI) into National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) by expanding the Memorandum of Articles of Association (MoAA) of NFDC, the mandates of these four Film Media Units have been transferred to NFDC. These four Film Media Units have ceased existence w.e.f. 01.01.2023. The existing staff of FD, DFF and NFAI as on 01.01.2023 were declared surplus and transferred to Surplus Staff Establishment (SSE) created by the Ministry of I&B. However, the existing staff of CFSI were adjusted in Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune and Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), Delhi and Kottayam. The Ministry of I&B is in consultation with DoPT for acceptance of surplus staff on the Surplus Roll of DoPT for their re-deployment in various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India”.

101. When asked to provide details of the financial and physical targets set and achieved after the merger of the above-mentioned four film media units, the Ministry stated that:-

“(i) During FY 2022-23, the Budgetary Allocation was Rs.10 crore for the period 01.01.2023 to 31.03.2023 for the establishment expenditure of the four

merged Film Media Units. NFDC has successfully utilized Rs. 8.21 crore and the balance Rs.1.79 crore could not be utilized due to some technical glitches at the year-end payment on 31.03.2023. Physical target fixed i.e. repair and maintenance of all the four merged Film Media Units was achieved.

- (ii) During FY 2023-24, the Budget Allocation was Rs. 23.77 crore and the utilization was also Rs. 23.77 crore. All the Budgetary Allocation in respect of establishment expenditure received towards the merged four Film Media Units has been utilized during FY 2023-24. Accordingly, physical target fixed i.e. repair and maintenance of all the four merged Film Media Units was achieved”.

(iii) Film and Television Institute of India (FTII)

The Film Institute of India was set up by the Government of India in 1960 under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. Following the addition of the Television Wing in 1971, the Institute was re-designated as the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII). The Institute was registered as a Society in October 1974 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. The FTII Society consists of eminent personalities connected with Film, Television, Communication, Culture, Alumni of the Institute and Ex-Officio Government Members. The Institute is governed by a Governing Council, headed by Chairman. The academic policies of the Institute are formulated by the Academic Council. The matters involving finance are controlled by the Standing Finance Committee. The Institute consists of two Wings: Film and Television. The Three-Year courses lead to the award of Post Graduate Diploma in Direction & Screenplay Writing, Cinematography, Sound Recording & Sound Design, Editing and Art Direction & Production Design. The Institute also offers a Two-Year Post Graduate Diploma Course in Screen Acting and Screenwriting (Film, TV & Web Series). The Television Courses consist of one-year Post Graduate Certificate Course with specialisations in TV Direction, Electronic Cinematography, Video Editing, and Sound Recording & TV Engineering.

102. The BE, RE and AE for the last four years and BE for 2024-25, under FTII, as furnished by the Ministry, are as follows:-

Film and Television Institute of India (FTII)				(₹ in crore)	
year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t BE	% w.r.t RE
2020-21	49.40	37.97	37.97	76.86	100.00
2021-22	58.48	45.09	42.67	72.97	94.63
2022-23	55.39	68.53	68.53	123.72	100
2023-24	64.75	73.47	70.64	109.10	96.15
2024-25	87.11	-	-	-	-

103. Details of the Physical targets set and achieved during 2023-24 and Physical target set for the year 2024-25 under FTI, are:-

'Other Central Expenditure [including those on Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and Autonomous Bodies]'	Physical target set during 2023-24	Physical target achieved during 2023-24	Physical target set during 2024-25
Film and Television Institute of India (FTII)	(i) Completion of construction of New Auditorium. (ii) New admissions for regular batch of Film & TV courses.	98% 100%	(i) Completion of construction of New Auditorium. (ii) Start of construction work for two new studios with budgetary provision of Rs.60 crore approx. (iii) New admissions for regular batch of Film & TV courses.

104. On the issue of the major challenges witnessed in achieving the physical targets set under the FTII during 2023-24 and the reasons for non-achievement of the targets alongwith the measures taken to overcome them, the Ministry submitted that:-

“Due to additional batches, extra manpower was required and there was shortage of funds under the Head GIA-General. But inspite of that, with the available resources the target was achieved”.

105. Regarding plans to improve the performance under the FTII for the year 2024-25, the Ministry stated that:-

“TSA is implemented for proper management of budgetary expenditure. Continuous follow-up of activities for timely completion of projects. The necessary approvals are also being taken up on priority basis to ensure utilization of allocated funds”.

(iv) National Centre for Excellence for Animation, Visual effects, Gaming and Comics(NCOE-AVGC)

The Union Government approved the setting up of a National Centre of Excellence for AVGC-XR as a Section 8 company. This will be a pioneer institute in the field of Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR). This institute will be established on 10 acres of land at Goregaon, Mumbai. National Centre of Excellence for AVGC-XR will act as the anchor institution for the growth of AVGC-XR sector in the country on the lines of IITs and IIMs. The Ministry is poised to the first edition of World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) in February 2025 to bolster India's media and entertainment industry and extend its global influence. Create in India Challenge (CIIC) Season-1 was launched as a run-up to WAVES. 27 competitions are being run by leading industry associations, covering a wide range of disciplines, including animation, filmmaking, gaming, music, and visual arts. The Ministry also envisage to formulate a National Policy for the growth of AVGC-XR in the country.

106. The Ministry has submitted that World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) would be held in February, 2025 and for this 'Create in India Challenge (CIIC)' Season-1 was launched by HMIB as a run-up to WAVES on 22.08.2024 at National Media Centre. When asked to furnish details of the benefits to India in this summit and its expected effects on the lives of common man, who form the core beneficiaries of the schemes of the Ministry, the Ministry provided the following information:-

“WAVES is poised to ignite a cultural and economic revolution in India. Beyond its immediate impact on the entertainment industry, this Summit offers a transformative opportunity for the nation's citizens in the creative sector. Under the platform of WAVES, various challenges are being run by industry associations in the areas of film/reel making, animation, e-sports, comics, AI, gaming and so on. The purpose is to hunt and showcase Indian talent, especially talent of the youth, before the global audience.

107. Elaborating on this, the Ministry stated:-

“

- i. The Summit is projected to generate significant employment opportunities over the next decade through the expansion of content creation and related services. This growth will not only provide jobs but also contribute to economic stability for many families.
- ii. With initiatives like the Create in India Challenge (CIC), WAVES aims to empower individual creators by providing platforms to monetize their talent and reach global audiences. This not only enhances their financial independence but also fosters a thriving ecosystem where creativity is nurtured.
- iii. The CIC is designed to engage the youth across India, generating excitement and discovery of emerging talents. By nurturing this potential, WAVES encourages

- innovation and creativity among the younger generation, which can lead to new career paths and entrepreneurial ventures.
- iv. WAVES will unlock the immense potential of the AVGC-XR segment, leading to innovations that can improve entertainment options available to the public, from quality films to engaging games.
 - v. By facilitating collaborations and co-productions with international creators, WAVES aims to enhance India's presence in the global market. This opens up avenues for local talent to showcase their work on a larger stage, enriching the cultural landscape and providing diverse content for audiences.
 - vi. The promotion of cutting-edge technologies will not only modernize the M&E sector but also lead to better content delivery and experiences for consumers. This technological leap can improve the quality and accessibility of entertainment options for the average citizen.
 - vii. WAVES will create opportunities for local industry stakeholders to interact with global leaders, resulting in knowledge sharing and best practice adoption. This exchange of ideas can improve industry efficiency and ultimately benefit consumers through better services and products.
 - viii. By nurturing the growing startup ecosystem, WAVES encourages entrepreneurship in the M&E sector, which can lead to new job creation and innovative solutions that directly benefit consumers."

108. When the Committee wanted to know about the status and objectives of setting up of a National Centre of Excellence for AVGC-XR (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, and Extended Reality) as a Section 8 company in Goregaon, Mumbai, the Ministry submitted their reply as under:-

"The genesis of NCoE may be traced back to 12th Plan Scheme and the Hon'ble Finance Minister in her budget announcement during FY 2014-15 said "a National Center of Excellence (NCoE) in Animation, Gaming and Special Effects will be set up

The objective is to create world-class talent pool in India to cater to the Indian as well as global industry and to set-up an Incubation Centre for the AVGC sector and to provide opportunities for small players to grow. It is supposed to offer UG, PG, level course and short term courses in different disciplines of AVGC sector at affordable cost and promote research in the AVGC sector by offering research intensive Programmes.

NCoE as envisioned by the Ministry would be an independent, industry-led institution which not only provides employment to the youth, but also responds to the skilling requirements of the industry, so that both the youth and the industry can benefit from it.

NCoE is being set up in collaboration with FICCI, CII and Govt. of Maharashtra under section 8 of the Companies Act in. The Committee on Expenditure Establishment (CEE) has approved the proposal of setting up of NCoE. The Hon'ble Minister of Finance has also approved the proposal with a one time budgetary support of Rs. 391.15 crore.

An Interim Committee with MD, NFDC as overall in-charge and one representative each from FICCI and CII was constituted to prepare the initial activities and interim operationalization of NCoE.

The Union Cabinet has accorded its approval for Setting up of National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) for Animation, Visual Effects (VFX), Gaming, Comics and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR) sector as a Section 8 company with a one time budgetary support of Rs. 391.15 crore on 18.09.2024. Government of Maharashtra has allotted 10 acre of land for the permanent campus of the NCoE in Dada Saheb Phalke Film City (Chitranagari), Goregaon, Mumbai.”

109. Examining the subject further, the Committee sought to know why the Ministry wanted NCoE to be an industry-led institution rather than led by the wings/attached offices of the Ministry and what kind of employment was expected to be generated by NCoE and which sector would be benefitted (skilled/unskilled). To this, the Ministry replied that:-

“1. Direct participation of the industry bodies will help in understanding the need of the industry and hence will be able to provide collective employment platform to those passing out from the NCoE.

2. Industry Bodies will provide the best of technologies to the NCoE and hence will allow NCoE to upgrade to the best in Innovation to allow India to upscale to global standards.

3. CII and FICCI have been considered as stakeholders due to the following reasons:

a) CII and FICCI each have set up dedicated AVGC forum, active not just in India but internationally also.

b) They both organize international events on AVGC sector promotion.

c) FICCI has a membership base of over 7000 members while CII has around 9,000 members.

d) Further, bodies such as NASSCOM, which is a chamber of commerce of the technology industry in India and comprises over 3000 member companies. They have members in the industry who already are being represented by FICCI and CII.

4. At the same time, the NCOE is open to the inclusion of other stakeholders such as NASSCOM, FFI, HDFC, etc., to participate as a shareholder in the proposed section 8 company”.

110. It was also added that:-

“1. Further, private sector’s participation and representation has been solicited in the Section 8 Company to ensure the following:

- * Industry Expertise and Innovation: Private companies in the AVGC sector possess invaluable expertise, cutting-edge technology, and innovative ideas that can greatly benefit the development of such a center. Their experience can ensure that the center remains up to date with industry trends and practices.

- * Skill Development and Talent Pool: Private sector collaboration can contribute to the development of skilled professionals in the AVGC field. By actively participating in training programs and curriculum development, companies can help create a skilled talent pool that can serve both public and private sectors, reducing the skills gap in the industry.

- * Economic Growth: The AVGC industry has significant economic potential, contributing to job creation and revenue generation. Private sector involvement can stimulate economic growth by attracting investments, fostering entrepreneurship, and promoting exports.

- * International Competitiveness: To compete on a global scale, India needs a thriving AVGC industry. A National Center of Excellence, with private sector support, can help Indian companies and creators produce content and technologies that can compete effectively in international markets.

- * Infrastructure and Equipment: The private sector can provide access to state-of-the-art infrastructure, software, and equipment that may be costly for the government to procure independently. This can lead to cost savings and faster development of the center.

- * Collaboration and Networking: Public-private partnerships encourage collaboration and networking among various stakeholders. This can result in cross-industry collaborations, joint ventures, and a more interconnected ecosystem that benefits all involved parties.

- * Handholding role of NCOE: The NCOE will handhold the existing educational institutions running AVGC related courses and advise them how to access technology, upgrade their curriculum, access finance, etc. as per the requirements of the industry.

- * Role of NCOE as facilitator amongst various stakeholders: NCoE will educate and develop public awareness and foster partnerships among different stakeholders, academia, and technology sectors.”

2. The NCoE, in partnership with the Ministry and industry, will set new standards in education, skilling, incubation, and research, becoming the primary facilitation

center for all stakeholders. NCoE is poised to provide vast career opportunities for the youth in the AVGC-XR segment across multiple verticals like Media, Entertainment, Events, Museums, Commerce, Governance, Education, Manufacturing, Defense, Healthcare, and Urban Planning among others”.

VIII. INFORMATION SECTOR

111. The Information Sector is responsible for information dissemination and awareness creation of the policies and activities of the Government of India through print, electronic and digital media, framing of policy guidelines for rate fixation of government advertisements on print, electronic, and online platform. It functions as an interface between the Government and the media and also provides feedback to the Government on people’s reaction as reflected in the media. It also advises the Government on communication strategies best suited to meet the needs of the media. Some of the Establishment Expenditure of Main Secretariat, Other Central Expenditure of Autonomous Bodies under Information Wing of the Ministry have been dealt in the following paragraphs.

(i) Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) and Upgradation of IIMC to International Standards

112. The Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), registered as a Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (XXI of 1860), came into existence on August 17, 1965. It was established with the basic objectives of teaching, training and undertaking research in the areas of media and mass communication. Over the past 56 years, the Institute has graduated into conducting a number of specialized courses to meet the diverse and demanding requirements of the rapidly expanding and changing media industry in modern times, in keeping with its original mandate “to make available facilities for training and research to meet the information and publicity needs of public and private sector industries. IIMC has its headquarters in New Delhi with five regional campuses at Dhenkanal (Odisha), Kottayam (Kerala), Aizawl (Mizoram), Jammu (UT of Jammu and Kashmir) and Amravati (Maharashtra).

113. Under the Thrust Areas of the Ministry for the current Financial Year, construction of additional buildings (Academic and Hostel Block) on the vacant land at the IIMC Campus, New Delhi, construction of permanent campus of western regional campus of IIMC at Badnera, Amravati, Maharashtra is likely to commence. The Ministry

has envisaged the commencement of Community Radio Stations on all campuses of IIMC and out of these 2 Community Radio Stations at Delhi and Aizwal is operational.

114. The budgetary allocations and utilizations for IIMC for the last four years are as under:-

Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)					
(Rs. in crore)					
year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t BE	% w.r.t RE
2020-21	61.30	41.41	25.93	42.30	62.62
2021-22	65.00	30.00	27.15	41.77	90.50
2022-23	52.00	41.00	29.21	56.17	71.24
2023-24	44.67	37.00	35.90	80.37	97.03
2024-25	54.69	-	-	-	-

115. On being asked about the Plans of the Ministry to improve the performance of IIMC during 2024-25 and the measures taken to overcome them, the Ministry submitted as follows:-

“Construction / expansion of new buildings and up gradation of classrooms, digital labs, etc. in the IIMC and digitalization of records and Implementation of e-Office are under process”.

(ii) Press Registrar General of India (PRGI)

The office of Registrar of Newspapers for India has been renamed as Press Registrar General of India – PRGI with the enactment of the Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023 and the simultaneous repealing of the old Press and Registration of Books Act 1867. The new Act has come into effect from March 1, 2024. The primary function of PRGI is to facilitate the registration of periodicals (print) in the country as per the provisions of the PRP Act, 2023. As a statutory establishment under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, this office strives to streamline regulatory functions through the adoption of digital technology and to promote transparency in all the processes it facilitates. PRGI maintains a Register of Records with details of Periodicals (print) published in India; allots titles to periodicals based on availability and Title Verification Guidelines; issues Certificates of Registration to them; receives and analyses the Annual Statements submitted by the publishers of these periodicals; brings out ‘Press in India’ Report with details of the state of affairs of newspapers and other periodicals in

the country. PRGI also authenticates self-declaration certificates for the import of newsprint to periodicals registered with PRGI. The office also carries out circulation verification of registered periodicals on the basis of requests received from the publishers or based on specific complaints and appeals. Among the thrust areas of PRGI, simplification of Registration of Newspapers/periodicals through implementation of Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023, digitization of physical records under which approximately 1.56 lakh physical records of Registration (since 1956) have been digitised and integrated with the portal for faster and seamless services to publishers and processing of nearly 13,000 pending cases of previous Act (PRB Act, 1867), several from the covid-era by 30th September, 2024 have been earmarked for this Financial Year.

116. The Budgetary allocations and utilisation under RNI, during last four years and BE for the current Financial Year, are as under:-

RNI		(Rs. in crore)			
year	BE	RE	AE	% w.r.t BE	% w.r.t RE
2020-21	7.81	5.66	5.87	75.16%	103.71%
2021-22	8.52	8.22	7.70	90.38%	93.67%
2022-23*	7.95	8.80	9.77	122.89%	111.02%
2023-24	12.36	11.20	10.23	82.77	91.34
2024-25	11.66	-	-	-	-

(*) Final estimates of PRGI for FY 2022-23 was enhanced to Rs. 10.27 Cr.

(iii) Central Bureau of Communication (CBC)

With Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) earlier known as the Bureau of Outreach and Communication was formed in 2017 by integration of the erstwhile Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) and Song & Drama Division (S&DD). CBC aims to provide 360-degree communication solutions to the Ministries/Departments/ Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs)/autonomous bodies of the Government of India. With 23 Regional Offices (ROs) and 148 Field Offices (FOs), CBC is engaged in informing people, both rural and urban, about the Government's policies and programmes to enhance their participation in developmental activities. This is ensured by the Bureau using different vehicles of communication viz. Print Media, Audio Visual, dissemination through Exhibitions, Outdoor, New Media etc. CBC is mandated to disseminate information and create awareness among people of the programmes, policies and schemes of the Government of India.

(iv) PIB Fact Check Unit

117. The Fact Check Unit was set up by the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in order to monitor and arrest the circulation & dissemination of factually incorrect/doctored news and information over different modes of news media and social media platforms, which often mislead people on various issues. The mandate of the PIB Fact Check Unit is to provide the official/authentic version of any news doing rounds on various media platforms by making available the factually correct information in the public domain. Since December 2019, PIB Fact Check has been relentless in its mission. According to the Ministry, a total of 1,39,990 queries were received, out of which 45,648 were actionable queries and were responded to. A total of 1,687 fake news & misinformation were busted and posted on social media platforms. Each of these fact checks is a result of multiple queries received. This impressive track record showcases our unwavering commitment to truth and accuracy. The impact extends beyond the numbers. PIB Fact Check's powerful presence on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram has garnered positive recognition from both media outlets and the public.

118. In the wake of the Judgment by the Bombay High Court, the Committee sought clarification regarding Fact Check Unit set up by PIB. To this, the Secretary, while tendering evidence submitted as under:-

“किसी भी सरकारी सिस्टम में अगर न्यूजपेपर में कोई आइटम आता है, अगर उसमें कोई फैक्टुअल अशुद्धियां हैं, तो आज से नहीं, बल्कि जब से सिस्टम चल रहा है, तब से उससे संबंधित प्रत्युत्तर, क्लैरिफिकेशंस आते हैं। अगर कई बार लगता है, तो प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस भी की जाती है। अगर कई बार लगता है कि कुछ मुद्दों को गलत तरीके से रखा गया है, तो उससे संबंधित बैकग्राउंडर्स इश्यू किए जाते हैं। उसी संबंध में पीआईबी में ऑलरेडी एक फैक्ट चेक यूनिट काम कर रहा है। जब कभी हमें किसी आइटम में ऐसा लगता है कि there is a need for us or for the Government to intervene, the PIB as the principal information disseminator, has been doing fact checks for many years.

यहां पर जो प्रश्न उठा था, जब आईटी रूल्स फॉर्मूलेट किए गए थे, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, तो उस रूल के अंदर आर्टिकल 3 में एक प्रोविजन था, जिसमें आर्टिकल 3 और सब क्लासिफिकेशन 1(बी) और उसका एक और सब क्लासिफिकेशन 5 में मध्यवर्ती संस्थाओं से संबंधित ड्यू डिलिजेंस की बात की गई थी। उसका टाइटल है - 'Due Diligence by Intermediaries and Grievance Redressal Mechanism.' ये सारी जो मध्यवर्ती संस्थाएं हैं, वह चाहे यू-ट्यूब हो, ट्विटर हो, फेसबुक हो, इंस्टाग्राम हो, इस तरह की जितनी भी मध्यवर्ती संस्थाएं हैं, उन सबके लिए ड्यू डिलिजेंस की जानी चाहिए, क्योंकि आईटी एक्ट के सेक्शन 29 के तहत they have the 'safe harbour' provision. उस संबंध में in the IT Rules, there was a line written like this:

“...the intermediary shall inform its rules and regulations, privacy policy and user agreement to the user in English or any language specified in the Eighth

Schedule to the Constitution in the language of his choice and shall make reasonable efforts [by itself, and to cause the users of its computer resource to not host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, store, update or share any information that, "उसमें जो ऑपरेटिंग बात थी, जिसको हाई कोर्ट ने स्टे किया था, सुप्रीम कोर्ट में नहीं है।"

119. Further being asked to elaborate on Fact Check Unit, the Secretary, during evidence submitted as under:-

“बॉम्बे हाई कोर्ट के 26 सितंबर, 2024 के ऑर्डर को केन्द्र सरकार के फैक्ट चेक यूनिट के संबंध में अब हम सुप्रीम कोर्ट में एसएलपी फाइल करेंगे। अभी यह केस हाई कोर्ट में चल रहा था। पहले दो जजेज़ ने अपने अपोजिंग व्यू प्वाइंट्स दिए थे, फिर थर्ड जज की रूलिंग आई थी। I will just read it verbatim. It actually related to this that the intermediary will make reasonable efforts कि कोई भी यूजर चाहे वह न्यूज वाला हो या कोई अन्य हो: “deceives or misleads the addressee about the origin of the message or knowingly and intentionally communicates any misinformation or information which is patently false and untrue or misleading in nature [or, in respect of any business of the Central Government, is identified as fake or false or misleading by such fact check unit of the Central Government as the Ministry may, by notification published in the Official Gazette, specify];” यह जो कंडीशन थी, अभी पीआईबी का जो फैक्ट चेक यूनिट है, we have not notified this under the Central Government and under this Act. इसको बाद में नोटिफाई किया गया था, तो उसी पार्टिकुलर प्रोविजन पर the High Court has stayed it. अगर हमारे पास कोई स्टे नहीं होता, तो we could have made the intermediary fall in line if a particular item had been fact checked by this Fact Check Unit”.

120. On being asked under what provision, the Fact Check Unit is currently functioning in the Ministry, the Secretary, submitted during the deposition before the Committee as:-

“The Fact Check Unit of the Central Government had to be notified under the IT Rules which was notified by the Ministry of IT. The PIB Fact Check Unit, which is our internal office, which was notified by the IT Ministry, has been stayed. So, right now, we do not have the Fact Check Unit, as notified under Section 3 (5) of the IT Rules. This has been stayed right now. Let me read from the judgment that was being quoted:

“The portion of the Rule 3(1)(b)(v) pertaining to the Fact Check Unit of the Central Government has been struck down on following grounds:

So, this is what the Court has struck down. Now, with this portion being struck down, if we do any notification under PIB fact check, we are well within our right to do it because we have not done it under the IT Rules. But right now,

because this Fact Check Unit is not considered as notified under these rules, the intermediaries are currently under no obligation to add any disclaimer, take down or undertake any action pursuant to a piece of information identified as fake, false or misleading by the PIB Fact Check Unit. So, even today if we keep doing fact check, because if there are facts about the Central Government, which we consider have been wrongly reported, intermediaries right now are under no obligation to tell their users that यह जो पार्टिकुलर फैक्ट चैक हुआ है, इसके बेसिस पर मैं आपके कंटेंट को पुल डाउन करता हूँ। आज भी वह कंटेंट वहीं रेस्ट कर रहा है। हम अपनी तरफ से फैक्ट चैक करते हैं, we, as a user of that particular intermediary, उदाहरण के लिए किसी ने ट्विटर पर गलत सूचना भारत सरकार के लिए डाली हुई है, तो हम भी अपना फैक्ट चैक करते हैं और हम भी अपनी सूचना वहां डाल देते हैं। दूसरे यूजर ने डाली हुई थी, वह सूचना भी वहां पर रहती है। Currently, the intermediaries are under no obligation because we could not notify this Fact Check Unit under these IT Rules”.

121. Clarifying more on the Rules under the ambit of which Fact Check Unit constituted and whether any AI tool or any other thechnology is assisting it, the Secretary, during evidence, replied:-

“It has always been the business of the Information & Broadcasting Ministry and the Press Information Bureau, if there are inaccuracies or factual problems in the facts which are related to the Government, they are rectified. Much before the internet age came in, पहले जब अखबार में कोई गलत न्यूज आती थी तो सरकार उससे रिलेटेड प्रेस वार्ता करती है या अपना रिजॉयण्डर पब्लिक करती है और क्लेरिफिकेशन देती है। जो सूचना पिछले दिनों अखबार में छप चुकी है, वह तो हटती नहीं है, लेकिन अगले दिन सुबह सरकार की तरफ से प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस की जाती थी और अभी वह की जाती है। इस तरह से इन सारे आसपेक्ट्स को कवर किया जाता है। जो फैक्ट चैक सरकार के द्वारा किया जाता है, वह सरकार से रिलेटेड होता है।

Under the Press Information Bureau, we have a setup, an internal organization which has members of the Press Information Bureau side. There is also a research unit which has members not just from the Government but, at the same time, it also has support staff to take care of that activity.

प्रिंसीपली जो सूचना फैक्ट चैक की जाती है, वह कंसर्ड मिनिस्ट्री, जिससे वह इन्फॉर्मेशन संबंधित है, उस मिनिस्ट्री के इंटरनल सिस्टम के द्वारा उस सूचना को वहां पर देखा जाता है और उसमें कोई फैक्टुअल इनएक्यूरेसी रहती है या कई बार कुछ नंबर्स गलत होते हैं, जो केवल सरकार से रिलेटेड हों, only related to the affairs of the Central Government, the Ministry concerned is responsible for identifying any factual inaccuracies.

In the new age when you have, instead of the newspapers, the publishers are running through an intermediary platform like social media like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, अगर हमारा यह फैक्ट चैक यूनिट इस पार्टिकुलर रूल के तहत नोटिफाई हो जाता तो, it would have been incumbent on the intermediary to delete that particular content which was identified as fake. But now because that is not there, both the contents exist. This particular condition has now been struck down. Therefore, currently the Fact Check Unit that is there is only an internal mechanism of our Department, and it is not related to any notification to be issued under Rule 3. That is the essential difference”.

IX. North Eastern Region (NER)

122. The detailed statement of BE, RE and AE of funds marked for North-East Region for the last four years, along with the allocations made for the year 2024-25, as furnished by the Ministry are:-

Allocations and expenditure under NER (Rs. in crore)					
year	BE	RE	AE	AE % w.r.t BE	AE % w.r.t RE
2020-21	74.00	45.29	51.79	70%	120.67%
2021-22	63.24	45.00	24.61	38.92%	54.69%
2022-23	63.00	63.90	25.24	40.06%	39.50%
2023-24	110.50	102.73	86.80	78.55%	84.50%
2024-25	100.43	-	-	-	-

123. When the Committee sought details regarding the Physical targets set and achieved under the Schemes/projects being implemented in North-East Region (NER) for the last two years marked for and the reasons for their shortfall in targets, the Ministry replied as under:-

“The expenditure involved for the campaign carried out for NE region from out of the HQr fund is less due to low rate for all media (print, TV & Radio spot, Outdoor etc.)

Some campaign released for NE were not carried out by the media house, especially the outdoor campaign due to logistic issues.

Regional Editors conference could not be conducted due to some administrative reasons”.

124. The details of the new initiatives planned for North-East Region for the year 2024-25, as submitted by the Ministry in their written reply, are as follows:-

“CRS:

Under the Scheme, amount of financial assistance has been increased to encourage more and more eligible organisations to come forward and set up Community Radio Stations in the larger public interests. The amount of financial assistance has been increased from Rs. 12 Lakhs to an amount varying from Rs. 18.20 to Rs. 24.00 Lakhs. Further, in the current financial year, 2 Community Radio Awareness workshops have been planned.

BIND:

It is the constant endeavour of Prasar Bharati to complete the projects within the specified time frame. Monitoring mechanism has been strengthened considerably. Procurement procedures have been streamlined. Project review meetings are held regularly at Zonal level & HQ level and various activities involved in procurement of capital equipment and execution of works are critically assessed & targets are fixed. The frequency of monitoring meetings have been increased at all levels of Directorate & Prasar Bharati Sectt. Use of digital platform viz e-office, e-tendering, procurement through GEM, Video conference is also being utilized.

In addition to above, a dedicated IPMC (Integrated Project Monitoring Cell) has been created under the chairmanship of CEO (PB) to monitor the progress of projects and improvement in their implementation.

DCDFC:

A detailed concept plan for carrying out activities under DCDFC Scheme in North-East region has been prepared. This concept note include :

1. Production of feature films, DOCUMENTARY, animation films in various NE languages.
2. Exhibition of Children’s Film in NE Schools.
3. Support for organization of Film Festivals in NE Region.
4. Participation of NE delegates for various Domestic & International Film Festivals.
5. Distribution of completed films/ projects of NER
6. Procuring Digital Rights of the films from NE for OTT Platforms.
7. Script Writing/Movie Direction/ workshop in film Making including Animation/VFX-Gaming Course/Master Classes for interested Film makers/students from NE.

DCID:

Similar activities/programmes such as Vartalaps, Press Tours, Information and Dissemination & Awareness Campaigns through various Media Vehicles viz. Print, Audio Visual, Outdoor on the subject matters of National importance, will be taken up under the Scheme during 2024-25 on a continuing basis, as has been done in the past”.

Annexure 'A'

Targets, achievements, Shortcomings under Thrust areas for 2023-24					
S.No.	Component	Sub component	Projects/ Sub-projects	Achievements	Reasons for Shortfall
1.	Continuing Scheme	Modernization (including Digitization), Augmentation & Replacement of Transmitters	Tower strengthening at Gangtok	In view of safety concerns, Tower Strengthening Project has been dropped.	Project dropped.
		Modernization Augmentation & Replacement of Satellite Broadcast equipment	Modernization of Earth station at 11 locations	Modernization of Earth station at all 11 locations (Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Bhopal, Thiruvananthpuram, Shimla, Jammu, Jalandhar Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Jaipur & Kolkata) completed.	---
			SITC- Uplink antenna system (at Bhubaneswar, Thiruvananthpuram Ahmedabad, Chennai, Lucknow and Kolkata) .	Uplink Antenna project completed.	---
			SITC- Uplink antenna system at Chandigarh	Project completed.	---
			Up-gradation of DTH Earth station Pitampura (Modulator and IF switching system)	(Envisaged to float single tender for complete earth station chain including Input & Base-band; Compression & Monitoring and RF chain) Status is given at "Automation & Modernization of Satellite Transmission Facilities to HD" under Component-2.	Tender for Procurement of compression & monitoring system has been cancelled due to administrative reasons.
			Modernization and digitalization of	Procurement of balance studio	All projects completed.

	studios/New studios.	equipment of 12th plan/ procurement of studio equipment under BIND scheme (2017-2021) for various Kendras. Pilot project for SITC of File based workflow technology at DDK Hyderabad.		
	Expansion of DTH	<p>i) Distribution of 1.2 Lakh DTH receive Set top boxes for LWE remote & tribal areas of the country.</p> <p>ii) Up-gradation of Earth station at DTH Pitampura (C Band)- SITC of equipments (Compression and monitoring System equipment etc.)</p>	<p>i) DTH receive Set top boxes is under procurement process together with 7.5Lakh (in project mode) and details are as mentioned in Sr No. 5 of STBs project under Project Mode.</p> <p>ii) Tender for Procurement of compression & monitoring system has been cancelled due to administrative reasons. (Envisaged to float single tender for complete earth station chain including Input & Base-band; Compression & Monitoring and RF chain) Status is given at "Automation & Modernization of Satellite Transmission Facilities to HD" under Component-2.</p>	<p>Distribution plan is being deliberated with Ministry.</p> <p>Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26</p>
	High Definition TV (HDTV)	SITC of Automated news production system at News HQ, Delhi	Project completed. ---	

		Augmentation of Civil Infrastructure including Staff Quarters and other works.	Balance work for completion of TV tower at Amritsar, shifting of Transmitter and other associated works.	Due to some administrative reasons work halted. Appropriate measure are being taken up by the Zonal Office in consultation with DG:DD and PBS.	Administrative reasons.
2.	Up-gradation of Public Service Broadcasting infrastructure including Expansion of DD Free Dish Platform, technical facilities for Live Coverage	Expansion of DD Free Dish DTH Platform	Expansion of DD Free Dish DTH Platform	Technical evaluation of Bids is under progress.	Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26
			Expansion of DD Free Dish Platform by SITC of additional two streams with RF system at earth station Todapur Delhi.	Technical specifications uploaded on PB Portal for industry feedback.	Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26
		DTH Disaster Recovery Centre	Setting up of Geo Diversity Centre for DD DTH platform similar to main site capacity	Preparation of Technical Specification and DR site Location is under Progress.	Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26
		Automation & Modernization of Program Production Facilities to HD	Upgrading the existing technical facilities at 24x7 Regional channels for HD production & post-production by i. Up-gradation of Studio based production facilities(PCR equipment & MSR/CAR equipment ii. File Based Production & Post production work flow iii. HD playout facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital frame synchronizer- Project completed. Supply of Studio Camera Chain & Accessories - Equipment supplied and training scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25. Supply of 64x64 3G/HD/SD SDI Routing Switchers –Equipment supplied and training scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25. Supply of 128x128 3G/HD/SDSDI Routing Switcher - Project completed. Supply of 32x32 Router 3G/HD/SD SDI Routing 	Only training part of Studio Camera Chain & Accessories and 64x64 3G/HD/SD SDI Routing Switchers is due and is scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25.

		<p>iv. Miscellaneous technical facilities & other associated equipment like Studio light, other audio video equipment</p> <p>v. Augmenting and Up-gradation of Program production facility for VVIP coverage of DD News</p> <p>vi. Augmenting of essential infrastructure AC Plants Electrical & Civil</p>	<p>Switcher- Project completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two projects of STILL Photography Equipment & Accessories - Project completed. • SITC of Professional Broadcast LED Studio Lighting Systems - Project completed. • 32 Input Quad Head Professional Quality High-Definition Multi-Image Processor – Project completed. • 2 ME Multi-format Video Mixers with 32 inputs and 16 Output - Project completed. • Analog and Digital Peripherals- Project completed. • Dual SPG with C/O – Project completed. • 55inch & 65inch Monitor Display – Project completed. • 3G HD-SDI Camera Channelswith Box lens and Wide-Angle Lens – Project completed. 	
	Automation & Modernization of Satellite Transmission Facilities to HD.	Upgradation and replacement of C-Band DTH Earthstation at Pitampura(RF equipment)	Technical Specification under review. (A single tender will be floated for complete earth station chain including Input& Base-band; Compression &Monitoring and RF chain)	Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26
		Replacement of (1+1) HPA system at DDK New Delhi	Project clubbed with Up-gradation & replacement of C-Band DTH Earth station at Pitampura, Delhi.	Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26

		Expansion of earth station at Leh & Vijayawada from 1 Channel uplink to 2 Channel uplink facility and Up-gradation and replacement of 2 x (1+1) earth station at Aizwal, Guwahati & Shillong	Preparation of Technical Specification is under Progress.	Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26
	Augmentation of News Production Equipment	News acquisition and production equipment like MOJO Kits, Backpacks, Teleprompter, NRCS system, NLEs etc. for News HQ & Regional News Units, PBNS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teleprompter for DD News- Project completed. • 5G and 4G cellular mobile news gathering Units – Equipment supplied and training scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25. 	Only training part of 5G and 4G cellular mobile news gathering Units is due and is scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25.
	Up-gradation of Technical Facilities to HD for Live coverages	<p>Up-gradation of Technical Facilities to HD for Live coverages</p> <p>i) Up-gradation/ replacement of Multi-Camera Mobile Production facilities (OB van & EFP Van) including Vehicle and HD Production Equipment</p> <p>(ii) Providing Fly away HD production facilities.</p>	<p>i) SITC of Native UHD Multi- Format Mobile Production facilities (OB Vans) of 8 Camera – Purchase order issued, delivery in Q2 of 2024-25.</p> <p>ii) Supply of fully built and integrated Native UHD Modular Fly Pack OB Units consisting of 32 cameras and of up to 05 standalone configuration – Equipment supplied and training scheduled in Q1-Q2 of 2024-25.</p>	<p>Work on project initiated. However, project envisaged in next years of BIND Scheme 2021-26.</p> <p>Only training part of Fully built and integrated Native UHD Modular Fly Pack OB Units consisting of 32 cameras and of up to 05 stand alone configuration is due and is scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25.</p>

3.	Content Development & Content innovation including associated technology for the same	Technology for content Innovation (i).Content Enrichment Technology including Video Walls, Virtual Sets AR equipment and Pilot on VR solution (ii).Pilot Project on 4K/ UHD Content Production (iii) Pilot Project on Studio Production Automation	i) SITC of Direct view Active LED Video Walls with accessories straight & curved for DDKs ii) SITC of Native UHD Multi Format Mobile Production Facilities (OB Vans/Trucks) of 12 Camera each at DDK Delhi & CPC Delhi	i) Project completed. ii) Purchase order issued, delivery in Q2 of 2024-25.	---
4.	Expansion of reach of Public Service Broadcasting including in Strategic / areas of national interest(LW E, Border, aspirational districts other such areas Strategic / national importance) including growing base of DD Free Dish settop boxes	Scheme for DTH receive sets to grow base for DD Free dish.		Clubbed with Sr. No.5 (Project Mode) of BIND i.e. "DD Free Dish STBs distribution in strategic areas.	

5.	Project Mode	DD Free Dish STBs distribution in strategic areas (approx 7 Lakh units with App based authorization) and Streaming of Radio Channels available on DD Free Dish through wi-fi hot spots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of 7.5 Lakh DTH Receive sets in SITC mode in project mode along-with • Distribution of 1.2 Lakh DTH STBs under component Expansion of DTH BIND scheme 2017-21(Continuing Scheme of 2021-26) (Clubbed together Distribution of 8.7 Lakh DTH Receive sets) 	Financial bid opened on 29.02.2024 for Consolidated tender of 8.7 Lakh STBs opened. Portal for beneficiaries data populated with all the details.	Distribution plan is being deliberated with Ministry.
	Facelift of DD & AIR Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Non Linear Editing System ii) MOJO Kit iii) Other Associated production equipments Mobile News Gathering unit (Back-pack), Compact camcorders, Graphics System, Virtual set News Room Computer System, Automated Play-out System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Non-Linear Editing Systems & Workstations & Desktop Systems– Project completed. ii) Mobile Journalist (MOJO) Kits- Project completed. iii(a) SITC of 4 Camera MCU (Multi Camera Units) - Equipment supplied and Training scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25. iii(b) SITC of Vehicle Mount DG Sets of Minimum 62.5 KVA (01 No) &100KVA (01 No) Capacity- Equipment supplied and Training scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25 		Only training part of SITC of 4 Camera MCU (Multi Camera Units) and SITC of Vehicle Mount DG Sets of Minimum 62.5 KVA (01 No) &100KVA (01 No) Capacity is due and is scheduled in Q1 of 2024-25.

S.No.	Verticals	Nos of Court Cases
1	Akashvani	480
2	Doordarshan	320
3	CCW	55
4	DDNews/RNU	32
5	NSD	10
Total		897

Details of few prominent court cases due to which promotions of the Programme/ Engineering cadre in Prasar Bharati, till recent times, had to be put on hold thereby causing delays in promotion, areas under:-

1. Brief in O.A.No.1456/2018 and O.A.No.1719/2018 filed by Shri G.Suresh and others in CAT, Bengaluru

Some of the Cameraman Grade-I approached CAT Bengaluru in O.A.No.1456/2018 and

O.A. No. 1719/2018 demanding induction into JTS grade of IB(P)S as Programme Officer (CM). The case attained finality in Hon'ble Supreme Court vide their order dated 23.01.2024 in SLP No.8567-8568/2021. Promotions in IB(P)S cadre had to be put on hold till dismissal of this SLP.

After dismissal of SLP No.8567-8568/2021, Ministry of I&B, vide communication dated 19.02.2024, advised Prasar Bharati to go ahead with the promotions in STS grade of IB(P)S except in the Programme Production cadre of Doordarshan. However, this intent was challenged by Shri V. Anil Kumar and others vide O.A. No. 142/2024 in CAT, Bengaluru. CAT, Bengaluru, vide interim order dated 27.02.2024 granted stay on implementation of Ministry's communication dated 19.02.2024. Only after vacation of this interim order dated 23.04.2024, promotions in STS grade of IB(P)S-both in Akashvani and Doordarshan could be carried out subject to final outcome of pending O.As in this regard.

2. Brief in O.A. 2988/2024 filed by Dr. Uma Shanker Singh vs Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in CAT, Principal Bench, New Delhi

Programme Executives (PEXs) on deemed deputation to Prasar Bharati filed O.A. no. 2988/2024 in CAT, Principal Bench, New Delhi, demanding promotion to the JTS grade in IB(P)S, before considering Prasar Bharati PEXs for promotion to the JTS grade. The learned counsel for the petitioners informed the court that

the meeting was expected to be held on 05.08.2024 for promotion to the post of JTS grade (Programme Cadre). Hon'ble CAT, PB, vide its order dated 01.08.2024 directed the Respondents to maintain status quo in the promotion to the post of JTS grade (Programme Cadre).

3. Brief of court case W.P. (C) NO. 2110 OF 2003 filed by Association of UPSC recruited Programme officers of All India Radio & ors.Vs.Union of India & Ors. In the High Court of Delhi.

W.P. No. 2110/2003, with regard to allocation of vacancies which occurred in JTS grade of IB(P)S during 06.03.1982 to 23.10.1984, is subjudice in Hon'ble High Court of Delhi. Hon'ble High Court vide their order dated 12.12.2022 has stayed the promotion of Prasar Bharati JTS Programme officers to further grade. An application for vacating this stay has been filed by DG: AIR and decision on this application is pending.

4. Brief in OA 1475/2023 filed by Association of Prasar Bharati Engineering Employees & others and O.A. No.3532/2023 filed by Sh. Diwakar Singh & Ors in CAT New Delhi, O.A. No.84/2023 filed by Shri Heigrujam Surjit & Ors in CAT, Guwahati and O.A. No.511/2023 filed by Sh. Pankaj Tiwari & Ors. Before CAT, Jaipur Bench.

Above mentioned court cases were filed by Engineering Assistants of Prasar Bharati in the matter pertaining to stay of the conduct of LDCE Exam 2023 for promotion from SEA to AE which was already notified by National Academy of Broadcasting and Multimedia (NABM). In OA No. 1475/2023, CAT, Principal Bench gave a nod to go ahead with the conduct of LDCE. However, the final selection shall be subject to the outcome of the O.A. Promotion Orders for the post of Assistant Engineers were issued on 01.01.2024.

Further, promotion of administrative cadre in Prasar Bharati till recent times also could not be carried out due to some administrative glitches like non finalization of vacancies in different modes of recruitment, decision on filling up backlog vacancies or current vacancies etc.

Recently, Prasar Bharati Board, in its 187th meeting held on 27th September 2024, has taken a decision that a Committee be formed to examine the court cases filed by the employees. This Committee would make efforts to reduce the number of court cases by submitting its recommendations to the Prasar Bharati Board (PBB) where the PBB is the appointing authority, else the recommendations may be forwarded to the Ministry. Ministry in consultation with Prasar Bharati is also making continuous efforts for reducing the pendency status of court cases. These cases are being closely monitored by the Ministry on weekly basis by arranging meetings with the concerned senior officials of Prasar Bharati from time to time for deliberating on ways to reduce the pendency of court cases.

PART-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

BUDGET OVERVIEW AND DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2024-25)

1. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) is the focal point regarding policy matters relating to private broadcasting, administering the public broadcasting service (Prasar Bharati), multimedia advertising and publicity of the policies and programmes of the Government of India, film promotion and certification and regulation of print and digital media. The Ministry also handles the task of disseminating information about Government policies, schemes and programmes through different media vehicles. It plays a pivotal role in dissemination and free flow of information *via* radio, television, films, press and print publications, digital and social media, posters, advertising, and traditional modes of communication such as dance, drama, folk recitals, puppet shows. The expenditure of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and its attached/subordinate offices and autonomous/grantee bodies, including Prasar Bharati is covered under Demand No. 61. For the Financial Year 2024-25, an amount of Rs. 4342.55 crore has been identified for MIB at the Budget Estimate stage as against the proposed sum of Rs. 5017.64 crore. During the year 2023-24, the allocations at Budget Estimate (BE) and Revised Estimate (RE) stages were Rs. 4692.00 crore and Rs. 4449.76 crore respectively and the actual utilization was Rs. 4314.24 crore which is 96.95% of RE allocation. The Committee appreciate the fact that for the last few years the overall trend of actual expenditure has been above 90 percent of the allocations made at RE stage and expect the same trend will be continued during 2024-25.

2. For the Financial Year 2024-25, as against the proposed amount of Rs. 5017.64 crore, the Ministry at BE stage received Rs. 4342.55 crore which is approximately Rs. 700 crore lesser than the proposed amount. Out of this amount, Rs. 566.41 crore has been earmarked for the 'Establishment Expenditure of the Centre' against the proposed sum of Rs. 640.80 crore; Rs. 1004.31 crore has been allotted for the 'Central Sector Schemes' against the proposed amount of Rs. 1576.24 crore and Rs. 2771.83 crore is allotted for 'Other Central Expenditure [including those on Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and

Autonomous Bodies] against the proposed sum of Rs. 2800.60 crore. The Committee observe that the Ministry has been able to utilize more than 95 percent of RE allocation in all the three categories during the Financial Year 2023-24, which the Committee find as a healthy trend and believe that this trend would be repeated during current Financial Year also. The Ministry submitted that with advent of new forms of media, the requirement of Budget and funds dissemination has expanded hugely but the Ministry has not been able to get adequate funds for it.

The Committee have been assured by the Ministry that efforts would be made to utilize the allocated funds from the commencement of financial year itself and the Monitoring mechanism has been strengthened and review of progress of projects is taken up periodically. The Committee were informed that budgetary expenditure has been meticulously and categorically planned. Prasar Bharati has adopted digital techniques for prudent use of funds making it more efficient and transparent.

The Committee further note that for three Central Sector Schemes; (i) Development Communication and Dissemination of Filmic Content; (ii) Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND); and (iii) Supporting Community Radio Movement in India, there has been under-utilisation of funds during the financial year 2023-24 to the extent that the actual expenditure for these schemes were 97.10 per cent, 72.71 per cent, and 84.80 per cent respectively of the Revised Estimate allocation. In light of this observation, the Committee may be apprised of the roadmap for effective and optimum utilisation of funds during financial year 2024-25. The Committee would also like to know how the reduced allocation of Rs. 571 crore under Central Sector Schemes of the Ministry during financial year 2024-25 will affect their schemes/plans.

The Ministry informed the Committee that they have exhausted their funds for the schemes which will not last for more than two years and approached the Finance Department. The Ministry have further submitted that certain new schemes related to information dissemination in Digital Media and Social Media are in pipeline, for which a Revised Allocation of Budget would be proposed. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry may approach the Ministry of Finance seeking additional funds at RE stage to meet additional expenditure for

these schemes as well as for other scheme *i.e.* ‘Other Central Expenditure including those on Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and Autonomous Bodies’, ‘Central Sector Schemes’ and ‘Establishment Expenditure of the Centre’ so that these schemes do not suffer for want of funds and apprise them the results accordingly.

The Committee also note that as per decision taken in the Ministry, separate budget line entry has been created for Principal Accounts Office from financial year 2024-2025 onwards, which was earlier, included in the allocation of main Secretariat till financial year 2023-2024. The Committee may be enlightened about the rationale behind this decision.

3. The Committee have been informed that the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) earlier known as the Bureau of Outreach and Communication was formed in 2017 by integration of the erstwhile Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) and Song & Drama Division (S&DD) with the aim to provide 360-degree communication solutions to the Ministries/Departments/ Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs)/autonomous bodies of the Government of India and engage in informing people, both rural and urban, about the Government’s policies and programmes to enhance their participation in developmental activities. The Committee have been apprised that for the Financial Year 2024-25, the RE for CBC is Rs. 192.67 crore which has been granted against the BE of Rs. 200.11 crore, whereas the actual expenditure till 12.09.2024 stands at Rs. 90.19 crore only. The Committee would like to know the action plan for utilization of Rs. 110 crore (approx.) by the Ministry in the remaining period of the financial year and recommend making sincere efforts to ensure optimal utilization of balance funds. The Committee would also like to know whether the integration of DAVP, DFP and S&DD into one unit *i.e.*, CBC has yielded the desired results with better functionality and has eventually proved to be a cost saving measure. The Committee also emphasise that the funds allocated may be utilised judiciously and optimally.

BIND SCHEME- CHALLENGES AND MEASURES

4. While examining the Budgetary allocation for financial year 2024-25 and financial year 2023-24, the Committee observed that there was reduction of funds

under two categories. Allocation of the Ministry was reduced by Rs. 100.69 crore under Central Sector scheme i.e., Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) Scheme and Rs. 279.67 crore was reduced under the other Central Expenditure. In their submission, the Ministry stated that the reduction under the 'Other Central Expenditure Budget' was due to retirement of government employees who were on deemed deputation in Prasar Bharati, resulting in reduced demand in respect of pay and allowances as well as retirement benefits. While explaining about reasons for reduced allocation under BIND scheme, it was inter-alia stated by the Ministry that they were due to (i) time taken in framing specifications of new projects; (ii) delay in erection of towers due to technical and administrative issues; and (iii) multiple attempts made for tender procurement of 1,20,000 DTH sets for distribution in tribal, remote and Left Wing Extremism areas. Further, it has been submitted that the Ministry is considering adopting the DBT mode for distributing STBs for DD Free Dish and the modalities are being worked out in consultation with MHA and there are a number of pending litigations against the Ministry.

The Committee were enlightened that the Ministry is considering distribution of DD Free Dish Set-Top Boxes in Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode and modalities of the distribution are being worked out by Prasar Bharati. Consultations are also being done with the Ministry of Home Affairs to collect the beneficiary bank details and finalize payment eligibility criteria for the beneficiaries. Prasar Bharati is also in consultation with Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association (CEAMA) and India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) to ensure availability of DD Free Dish Set-Top Boxes in remote border areas and arrangement of installation and after-sales services of the Set-Top Boxes. The Ministry elaborated about enhancing the viewership and popularization of DD Free Dish Platform in VVP (Vibrant Village Programme) areas, BADP (Border Area Development Programme), North-East Region, LWE (Left Wing Extremism) affected areas, J&K, and other strategic areas. Distribution of 8.7 Lakhs DD Free Dish Receive sets was sanctioned under the BIND Scheme. The data of around 8.10 lakh beneficiaries has been collected through an online portal. Earlier distribution plan progressed in Supply Inspection Testing and Commissioning (SITC) mode, however, now it is being planned under the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode for enhanced transparency and efficiency. Prasar Bharati is working on modalities for distribution of DD Free

Dish DTH, with a decentralized model of delivery involving District Administration.

The Committee appreciate the efforts of the Ministry to connect the border areas with the main population of the country, but at the same time they would like to know about security measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Ministry to control the issues of hacking or proliferation via wi-fi across the border. The Committee would like the Ministry to address the various challenges encountered by projects under BIND scheme including procurement of 1,20,000 DTH sets and seek adequate funds from Ministry of Finance for the same in the next Financial Year with proper justification. The Committee also expect that the Integrated Project Monitoring Cell (IPMC) may also look into these challenges with all seriousness as it deserve.

EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF FUNDS

5. Even though, the Ministry had proposed Rs. 5017.64 crore under the Budget Estimate, they were allocated Rs. 4342.00 Cr. for the financial year 2024-25, which is Rs. 675.64 crore lesser than the amount sought. The Ministry in the thrust areas has highlighted on Artificial Intelligence (AI) based communication hub; overhauling of IIMC; formulation of National Policy for the growth of AVGC-XR in the country; and Promotion of Ease of Filming through India Cine Hub (ICH) portal among others. The Ministry informed the Committee about reviewing the expenditure of Prasar Bharati periodically and Prasar Bharati has been advised to regularly review the projects through an annual action plan and monitored at least on a monthly basis both from physical and financial progress point of view. The progress of expenditure is also being monitored closely at the senior officer levels. The Committee are given to understand that the Ministry have to utilize the funds judiciously to meet the targets fixed for thrust areas. The thrust areas enumerated by the Ministry are mostly technology driven which would require man power with specialized skills. The Committee while observing that Prasar Bharati is facing a huge challenge in engaging technical staff due to paucity of funds for its day-to-day programmes and functioning are a bit apprehensive about the shortage of manpower to handle the thrust areas. The Committee would, therefore, like to know about the action plan drawn by the Ministry to achieve desired results in these thrust areas in the absence of technically qualified personnel.

The Committee also urge the Ministry to ensure judicious utilisation of their resources and its output which should not suffer due to lack of funds.

IPMC (INTEGRATED PROJECT MONITORING CELL)

6. The Ministry apprised the Committee that it is the constant endeavour of Prasar Bharati to complete the projects within the specified time frame for which monitoring mechanism has been strengthened considerably and procurement procedures have been streamlined. The Ministry further conveyed that Project review meetings are held regularly at Zonal and HQ levels and various activities involved in procurement of capital equipment and execution of works are critically assessed and targets are fixed. The frequency of monitoring meetings has been increased at all levels of Directorate and Prasar Bharati Seretariat. Use of digital platform viz e-office, e-tendering, procurement through GEM, Video conference has also been utilized. In addition to above, a dedicated IPMC (Integrated Project Monitoring Cell) has been created under the Chairmanship of CEO (PB) to monitor the progress of projects and improvement in their implementation. The Committee were further informed that Monitoring of progress in respect of various targeted projects being undertaken in BIND Scheme (2021-26) for FY 2024-25. On ground status report with regard to the projects and difficulties being faced/ their solutions in execution of projects were deliberated among participants. The Committee would like to know about the achievements after the creation of IPMC. The Committee may be communicated about the composition of IPMC and wonder whether the Ministry have explored the possibility of including outside domain experts in this Cell for expert guidance.

The Committee also learn that the Visual Radio project being a first-of-its-kind initiative for Akashvani, was hindered initially due to it being a novel concept. However, the initial issues have been addressed by revising and firming up its design specifications. Its procurement has commenced through the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal and is expected to be completed within this financial year. The status of this project may be submitted at the earliest in

their Action Taken Report. The Committee would also like to know whether any work study for technical manpower requirement, training component, etc. has been done before launching this new project. If not, the Committee would like to suggest Ministry to factor into these requirements before launching the same and apprise them accordingly.

FULL UTILIZATION OF FUNDS FOR NORTH EAST REGION (NER) UNDER BIND SCHEME

7. The Ministry stated that in the FY 2023-24 around 50% funds were utilized for content creation under BIND. Some projects of Doordarshan (DD) for content creation, though not adversely affected, got delayed in NER. The NE Region was given these BIND Scheme works for the first time. The expenditure mechanism for BIND being altogether different from that of IEBR and shortage of programme staff at each NER Kendra led to inevitable delays. However, since these DDKs have been trained adequately and the expenditure mechanism is now fully in place, it is expected that from the current financial year 2024-25, full funds allocated under BIND scheme to Doordarshan Kendras of North-East Region would be utilized in content creation. Hiring of programme professionals on contract basis is also being done to support content creation. The Committee call upon the Ministry to take immediate steps to address the issue of staff crunch in technically driven schemes of the Ministry and would like to know if any preference to local people would be given while hiring programme professionals on contract basis for NE Region. Regarding the mechanism for full utilization of funds under BIND scheme for NER from the next Financial Year, the Committee would like to be informed of the status.

DIGITIZATION OF ARCHIVES OF DOORDARSHAN (DD)

8. The Ministry informed the Committee that all the DD channels are digitized and all possible efforts are being made to complete the remaining digitization at the earliest. The Ministry also submitted before the Committee that the archival content of public interest is being showcased through Social Media platforms like YouTube. The interested persons can approach Central Archives through email in

order to purchase the recordings/media under the ambit of various archival policies. Information to this effect has been made public on Prasar Bharati website. Regarding archives of DD, the Ministry submitted that the archives have been digitised to the extent possible and efforts are being made to complete the remaining digitisation at the earliest. The Committee have long been demanding that all archives of DD may be digitized at the earliest. However, the process of digitization is still incomplete. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the Ministry should expedite the process of digitization of all DD archives without any further delay so that archival contents are available to public for use. The Committee learn that social media platforms are being used to showcase the archival contents which are of public interest. The Committee wish to know what steps have been taken by the Ministry to take it to those sections of the society who are not using social media but are interested in watching these contents.

MONETISATION OF ASSETS OF DOORDARSHAN KENDRAS (DDKs)

9. The Ministry, while informing the Committee about whether any study had been conducted to assess the assets which were in idle state for a long time under Doordarshan Kendras in India, stated that no study has so far been conducted to assess the assets under Doordarshan Kendras in India. The Committee were further informed that Prasar Bharati Board has approved a draft monetization plan including feasibility study of Prasar Bharati land assets (both Akashvani & Doordarshan). The Committee were apprised that the draft monetization plan included that the Prasar Bharati will monetize land assets on PPP model without alienating the land and the revenue generated will be used by Prasar Bharati making it sustainable. The Committee would like to be apprised of the status of draft monetization plan and its intended objectives as well as outcomes. The Committee would also earnestly recommend that the Ministry should conduct study of all their assets which are lying in idle state for a long time in all Akashvani and Doordarshan Kendras by forming a Committee of experts and apprise them accordingly at the earliest.

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF IN PRASAR BHARATI

10. While submitting on the shortage of staff in Doordarshan Kendras, the Ministry deposing before the Committee stated that with change in technology, introduction of alternative platforms etc. manpower requirement has changed with passage of time. The Ministry further submitted that in Doordarshan Kendras, there is shortage of staff in programme, engineering, and administrative cadres. Promotions till recent times in programme/engineering cadre and departmental exams for promotion in administrative cadre could not take place mostly due to pending court cases. Apart from this, filling up of the posts earmarked through direct recruitment has also stopped due to dissociation of UPSC and SSC in respect of Prasar Bharati being an autonomous body. The Ministry further elaborated that the process of rationalization of staff as per the recommendations of Manpower Audit (MPA) report is under consideration. Detailing about the problems of recruitment in Prasar Bharati, the Ministry explained that officials are regularly retiring on superannuation and since there is no fresh recruitment taking place, the young talent are in short. The Ministry further submitted that to rationalize these problems, Prasar Bharati Recruitment Board was constituted on 01.07.2020 in accordance with Ministry of Information & Broadcasting notification dated 12.02.2020 and the process of recruitment to fill up the backlog vacancies for physically impaired persons was initiated by the Board.

The Committee observe that there is overall shortage of manpower in Prasar Bharati and that is being managed by re-deploying available manpower and hiring persons on assignment basis for assisting in production and day-to-day work of the Doordarshan Kendras. The Committee observe that the Manpower Audit of Prasar Bharati had recommended several steps to phase out obsolete technologies and unviable services, automate and IT enabled key operations and to outsource non-core activities so as to bring the man power requirements in line with global best practices in Public Broadcasting. The Committee urge the Ministry to make a holistic assessment of staff required in various cadres consequent upon change in technology. The Committee may be apprised of the follow up actions taken by the Ministry to sort out the problem of shortage of manpower and look into the feasibility of hiring and appointing staff on contractual basis. The Committee also propose that necessary steps should

be taken for hiring specialists on contract for new roles required by Prasar Bharati in line with the proposed structural change and build an effective mix of full time and contractual manpower till full time staff are recruited by Prasar Bharati Recruitment Board.

MIGRATION TOWARDS DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL TV

11. While furnishing details regarding action taken on the recommendations of the Sub-Group Committee in respect of the Terrestrial Broadcast of Prasar Bharati, the Ministry envisioned that any further expansion of Digital Terrestrial Transmission by Doordarshan should be undertaken only after finalization of a viable policy on Digital Terrestrial TV, identification of areas where such transmission will be continued and choice of appropriate technology. The Ministry further informed the Committee that Prasar Bharati has signed an MoU with IIT, Kanpur for collaborative activities in various areas and Proof of Concept (PoC) for Next Generation Technology- Direct to Mobile Broadcasting (D2M) was carried out by IIT, Kanpur in Bengaluru and Delhi.

The Committee observe that the Ministry is in the process of finalizing a suitable policy on Digital Terrestrial TV along with identifying areas where such transmission would continue with choice of appropriate technology. The Committee also note that for Direct to Mobile Broadcasting, IIT Kanpur has been assigned the collaborative activities and has initiated it in some of our cities. The Committee would like to be apprised about the outcome of these initiatives and depending on its success, the Ministry may initiate the Direct Mobile Broadcasting in more cities of India..

SHORTAGE OF STAFF IN ALL INDIA RADIO (AIR) AND GRIEVANCE OF AIR EMPLOYEES

12. The Ministry informed the Committee, while giving details on the issues with AIR regarding Grievance Redressal Mechanism for its employees, that Akashvani is facing acute shortage of Staff in all its cadres and wings. The Ministry further submitted that attempt is being made to overcome the same to some extent by engaging officials on short term contract basis. While elaborating

on Grievance Redressal and Access Mechanism, the Ministry informed the Committee that it has been functioning in accordance with the guidelines of Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievance and monitored through the Centralized Public Grievances Redressal and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS). Dwelling further on this matter, the Ministry explained that Public grievances and pension redressal petitions are being attended to promptly and disposed of at the earliest and Grievance redressal status reports on disposal of Grievances are submitted to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting as and when sought. The Committee note that the Ministry have to hire officials on a short term contract basis to overcome the problem of shortage of staff, which is pervasive in all cadres, wings and Kendras of Akashvani.

In the light of the poor condition of staff management in Akashvani, the Committee do opine that it should be taken up with the DoPT for bridging the gap of recruitment that is adversely affecting the functioning of Akashvani and resultantly the quality of its programmes. The Committee would also like to know the outcome of the request of the Ministry in September, 2022 for financial help which was submitted to the concerned Department to enable recruitment initially for critical posts and subsequently for other posts.

THE CINEMATOGRAPHY (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2023

13. The Ministry informed the Committee that the Cinematography (Amendment) Act, 2023 provides for (a) provisions to check unauthorised recording and exhibition of Films amounting to piracy; (b) age-based certification of films; (c) aligning with the Supreme Court judgements; (d) perpetual validity of certificates; (e) change of category of film for television; and (f) reference to Jammu and Kashmir. The Committee would like to be apprised of the efficacy of this Act in addressing the challenges being faced by the Film Industry and whether further views/suggestion of all the stakeholders have been obtained regarding the same. The Committee further want the Ministry to explain what measures have been taken to curb the explicit circulation of films not meant for viewership of children in any form in the market. The Ministry may also provide a detail of certificates of perpetual validity issued during the last 5 years along with

the criteria set for issuance of these certificates. Further, the Committee wish to know what steps have been taken to contain adults contents aired on Social, Digital and Electronic media and action taken/being taken against the channels which are persistent lawbreakers in terms of violating the norms laid down in the Cinematography (Amendment) Act, 2023.

ADULT CONTENTS ON OTT PLATFORMS

14. The Ministry informed the Committee that Part III of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 under the Information Technology Act, 2000 relates to publishers of online curated content, commonly known as OTT platforms. It was further submitted that OTT platforms providing access to content which has an “A” rating shall take all efforts to restrict access to such content by a child through the implementation of appropriate access control measures and in March 2024, the Ministry had taken action to block 18 OTT platforms publishing obscene, and, in some instances, pornographic content. 19 websites, 10 apps (7 on Google Play Store, 3 on Apple App Store), and 57 social media accounts associated with these platforms were disabled for public access in India. In view of the above information, the Committee harps upon the point that Ministry may furnish the details of preventive measures adopted by them so that the pervasion of restricted contents among children be stopped. The Committee would also like to know if such contents blocked by the Ministry on 18 OTT, 19 websites and 10 apps are easily available on social media and other media platforms like Telegram Channel. If so, the Committee may be apprised of how this situation could be dealt with. The Committee would further like to know whether the existing Legal Framework is ample enough to deal with this issue or more stringent laws are required to deal with this issue especially in view of the latest technologies in the field. The Committee may be informed of the contemplated action by the Ministry in this regard. The Committee would like to advise the Ministry that provision for some sort of deterrent punishment should be put in place for the repeated offenders in this regard. The Committee would also like to know whether the OTT platforms committing the same mistake under the guise of changing the name of

programmes, changing the means of dissemination and changing the IP address etc., with the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI) are strictly dealt with. The Committee would like to be apprised of the details in this regard.

OVERHAULING OF COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS (CRSs)

15. The Committee learn that for CRSs in 2022-23, the percentage of Actual Expenditure in respect of Budget Estimate was 52.08% while in respect of Revised Estimate, it was 66.66% and these figures in 2023-24 reached up to 84.80% for Budget Estimate and Revised Estimate. The Committee note that the Ministry have failed consistently over the years to utilize the entire fund allocated to them in CRSs. The Committee would like to know the reasons for the same and advise them to take appropriate corrective steps to address the issues which are responsible for surrender of funds and ensure optimum utilization of allocated funds.

The Committee were also explained by the Ministry that a total number of 29 applications for Community Radio Stations are pending with the Ministry, which are at various stages of processing for grant of permission for setting up of Community Radio Stations. The Committee would like to know the reasons for pendency of these 29 applications and also advise the Ministry to prepare a proper Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to deal with such requests in future so that time lag could be minimized.

AMENDMENT TO THE ALLOCATION OF BUSINESS RULES

16. The Central Government vide Notification dated July 28, 2023 has amended the 'Allocation of Business Rules' with respect to the subject relating to online advertisements. Thus, content made available by online content providers/publishers has been brought under the mandate of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The revised entry under Allocation of Business Rules of the Ministry are:-

VA. Digital/Online Media

22A. Films and Audio-Visual programmes/content made available by online content providers/publishers.

22B. News and current affairs content on online platforms

22C. Online Advertisements.

In this regard, it is stated that Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is in the process of formulation of Rules for regulation of online advertisements as per allocation of Business. The Committee would like to be apprised of the status of formulation of these Rules for regulations of online advertisements.

New Delhi;

16 December, 2024

25 Agrahayana, 1946 (Saka)

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY,

Chairperson,

Standing Committee on

Communications and Information Technology.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2024-25)**

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 16th October, 2024 from 1100 hours to 1245 hours in Committee Room No. '62', Samvidhan Sadan, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Dr. Nishikant Dubey - Chairperson

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Dr. Rabindra Narayan Behera
3. Shri S. Supongmeren Jamir
4. Shri Appalanaidu Kalisetti
5. Shri G. Kumar Naik
6. Dr. M.K. Vishnu Prasad
7. Shri Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy
8. Shri Devesh Shakya
9. Shri Rajesh Verma

Rajya Sabha

10. Shri Saket Gokhale
11. Smt. Priyanka Chaturvedi
12. Shri V. Vijayendra Prasad
13. Shri S. Niranjan Reddy
14. Shri Lahar Singh Siroya
15. Shri K.T.S. Tulsi

Secretariat

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Smt. A. Jyothirmayi | - | Director |
| 2. | Shri Rajesh Mohan | - | Deputy Secretary |

LIST OF WITNESSES

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (MIB)

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Shri Sanjay Jaju	Secretary
2.	Shri Deepak Narain	AS&FA
3.	Ms. Neerja Sekhar	Additional Secretary
4.	Shri Rabindra Kumar Jena	Sr. Economic Advisor
5.	Shri C. Senthil Rajan	JS (IP&A)
6.	Shri Sanjiv Shankar	JS (B-I)
7.	Shri Prithul Kumar	JS (B-II)
8.	Ms. Vrunda Manohar Desai	JS (Films)
9.	Dr. Ajay Shanker Singh	CCA

MEDIA UNITS OF MIB

10.	Shri Dharendra Ojha	Pr. DG, PIB
11.	Shri Gaurav Dwivedi	CEO, Prasar Bharati/ Member (Finance)
12.	Ms. Kanchan Prasad	DG: Doordarshan
13.	Dr. Pragya Paliwal Gaur	DG: AIR
14.	Shri. Yogesh Kumar Baweja	DG: CBC

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened to examine Demands for Grants (2024-25) related to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB).

(The witnesses were then called in)

3. After welcoming the representatives of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) to the sitting of the Committee, the Chairperson appreciated the fact that for the last few years, the overall expenditure has been above 90 per cent of the allocation made at the Revised Estimate stage and expect that the same trend will be continued during the Financial Year 2024-25 and in coming years also. The Chairperson made an observation that under the Information Sector in Secretariat Expenditure, separate budget line entry has been created for *Principal Accounts Office* from Financial Year 2024-25 onwards, which was earlier included in the allocation of *Main Secretariat* till Financial Year, 2023-24. Similarly, the allocation of *Private FM*

Radio Station under Broadcasting Sector has *been* merged within the allocation of *Main Secretariat* as a separate Detailed Head from Financial Year 2024-25. The Committee wished to be apprised of the reason for such a change.

4. Thereafter, the representatives of MIB introduced themselves to the Committee and made a Power Point presentation highlighting the Organizational Structure, Schemes, Budget, expenditure trends for last few years, physical and financial achievements, etc.

5. Thereafter, the Members raised queries and sought reasons on myriad issues such as adverse impact of reduced allocations on the 'Central Sector Schemes'; reasons for non-utilisation of allotted funds and the roadmap for its effective and optimum utilisation especially for BIND Scheme; issues related to Prasar Bharati, Community Radio Stations, the observation of the Judiciary on the Fact Check on Gol information since June 2024; decriminalization of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995; amendments to the Cinematograph Act; progress made in FM Radio Phase – III Policy; announcement of World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES); letter of Intent for FTII and SRFTI as Deemed University; starting of two PG Courses after IIMC declared deemed to be University in Jan,2024; and initial activities for setting up National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) in AVGC Sector etc.

6. The representatives of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting responded to most of the queries raised by the Members. The Chairperson, then, directed that written replies to points on which information were not readily available may be furnished to the Committee within ten days.

7. Thereafter, the Chairperson thanked the representatives of MIB for deposing before the Committee.

The witnesses then withdrew.

A copy of verbatim record of the proceedings was kept on record.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

(2024-25)

MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee sat on Monday, the 16 December, 2024 from 1015 hours to 1045 hours in Committee Room No. 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY- Chairperson

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Dr. Rabindra Narayan Behera
3. Shri Anup Sanjay Dhotre
4. Shri S. Supongmeren Jamir
5. Shri G. Kumar Naik
6. Dr. M.K. Vishnu Prasad
7. Shri Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy
8. Shri Devesh Shakya
9. Shri Vishnu Datt Sharma

Rajya Sabha

10. Shri Amar Pal Maurya
11. Dr. Sasmit Patra
12. Shri V. Vijayendra Prasad
13. Shri Lahar Singh Siroya
14. Shri K.T.S. Tulsi

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Shri Y.M. Kandpal | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. A. Jyothirmayi | - | Director |
| 3. | Shri Rajesh Mohan | - | Deputy Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Sitting of the Committee convened to consider and adopt one draft Action Taken Report on Fifty-

Seventh Report (17th Lok Sabha) relating to the Department of Posts and four draft Reports on Demands for Grants (2024-25) relating to the Ministries/Department under the jurisdiction of Committee.

3. The Committee, then, took up the following five draft Reports for consideration and adoption:-

(i) XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX

(ii) XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX

(iii) Draft Report on Demand for Grants (2024-25) relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

(iv) XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX

(v) XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX

4. The Committee adopted the Reports without modifications.

5. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Action Taken Reports and present the same to the House during the current Session of Parliament.

6. XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX *

The Committee, then, adjourned.

* Matter not related to the Reports.