

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1334
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2006
CLASSIFICATION OF NEWSPAPERS/ MAGAZINES
Bishnoi Shri Kuldeep

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

- (a) whether the government proposes to classify the newspapers and magazines on the basis of contents published therein and issue certificates accordingly on the line of films;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the concrete steps taken by the Government on growing tendency of publishing obscene literature and pictures in newspapers and magazines in the name of sex education?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. DASMUNSHI)

(a): No, Sir.

(b): Does not arise.

(c) & (d): The press in India is free from Government control and is in the private sector. In pursuance of its policy to uphold the freedom of the Press, the Government does not interfere in its functioning. The Press Council of India (PCI) is a statutory autonomous body set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 with the objective of preserving the freedom of Press, maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India and to inculcate principles of self-regulation among the Press. PCI, which is self-regulatory body of the Press, has built "Norms of Journalistic Conduct", which cover principles and ethics with regard to journalism including guidelines stipulating "Obscenity and Vulgarity to be eschewed". These carry only moral force and are not enforceable in a Court of Law. Further, publishing of obscene material, is an offence under Section 3 of the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, which is administered by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Actual implementation of the Act rests with the State Governments.