

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2163
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2015
Powers of PCI
Chandumajra Shri Prem Singh;Singh Dr. Bholra

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

- (a) whether the Press Council of India (PCI) has been set up as a watch dog with a mandate to evaluate professional standards and trends for media, if so, the details and the functions thereof;
- (b) whether PCI has requested for increase in its legislative and financial powers to make it more effective and tackle rising attack on members of media and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether PCI has also advocated reduction in Government funding to maintain its autonomy and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the response of the Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING [(COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)]

(a) The Government, in pursuance of the objective of preserving the freedom of press and maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers in India and to inculcate the principles of self regulation among the press, has set up Press Council of India (PCI), an autonomous body under the Press Council Act, 1978. Accordingly, PCI in order to encourage the print media to practice self-regulation, have formed Norms of Journalistic Conduct under section 13(2)(b) of the Press Council Act, 1978. These norms cover general principles and ethics of journalism and is available on PCI's website www.presscouncil.nic.in. The complaints of contents in print media, which are violative of the ethics of journalistic practice, public taste, or professional conduct, are adjudicated by PCI under section 14 of the Press Council Act, 1978. The Council, after holding inquiry in accordance with Press Council (Procedure of Inquiry) Regulations, 1979, may warn, admonish or censure the newspapers, news agency, journalist or editor, as the case may be.

(b) PCI having observed that they require more powers provided under Press Council Act, 1978 for effective implementation of its directives, has proposed amendments in the Press Council Act, 1978 to arm the Council with more power. The salient features of their proposal are as under: -

(i) The Council may have jurisdiction over electronic media.

(ii) To provide more penal powers such as stoppage of release of Govt. funded advertisement to the offending newspaper, suspension of accreditation to the concerned editor or journalist, suspension of the registration of the newspaper for a specified period etc.

(iii) Besides making observations, the Council may also be given power to pass such orders and give directions to the authorities including Governments.

The proposal needs wide consultations with the stakeholders and evolving of consensus on the important issues relating to the media.

(c) No, Sir. At present, there is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

(d) Does not arise.
