

Government of India  
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting  
(Policy Planning Cell)

New Delhi, the 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2024

Sub.: Summary (No.- 3) to the Cabinet on the significant activities of Ministry of Information & Broadcasting for the month of March 2024.

The significant activities / events relating to this Ministry for the month of March 2024 are outlined below:-

1. **GENERAL ELECTION 2024 AND "MERA PEHLA VOTE DESH KE LIYE" CAMPAIGN**
  - 1.1 The "Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye" **campaign anthem** resonated widely, capturing the enthusiasm of students, singers, and musicians nationwide. Originally composed in Hindi, the anthem was translated into **11 Scheduled languages, as well as Adi and Khasi**. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's post on X garnered over 10.2 million views. Evolving into a '**Jan Andolan**', the campaign engaged nearly 500 prominent individuals from diverse backgrounds.
  - 1.2 The campaign, undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and MyGov, reached universities and colleges nationwide with a spectrum of engaging activities. Debates, seminars, dance and singing performances, street plays, and flash mobs were organized, drawing participation from over **5.4 lakh students**. MyGov hosted several activities, attracting over **2.55 lakh citizens**. The Ministry's social media handles spotlighted over 3,400 posts, amassing over **104 million impressions/views**, showcasing infographics, videos of youth taking the pledge, and appeals by renowned figures and first-time voters. The New Media Wing (NMW) spearheaded extensive online engagement using reels, memes, videos, and graphics under the hashtag **#MeraPehlaVoteDeshKeLiye**.
  - 1.3 The Ministry of I&B unveiled the February 2024 edition of the **PM's Mann ki Baat booklet**, featuring '**Mera Pehla Vote – Desh Ke Liye**' as the cover story. It included stories and testimonials with special mentions by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, alongside media reactions. The e-version reached over 6 crore citizens via e-sampark and is accessible on websites of the Ministry of I&B, MyGov, PM India, etc. Printed copies were distributed to all Hon'ble MPs and MLAs, senior officials of the Government of India and Governments of States/UTs, and regional offices of M/o I&B.
  - 1.4 DD News launched **special shows like 'Rajya Niti', 'Janadesh', 'Kya Bole Bharat', '24 Ki Chunauti', and 'Chunavi Chakkalass'** ahead of the 2024 General Elections, offering insights into the political landscape across states

through expert discussions and ground reports. Additionally, News Services Division, All India Radio (NSD, AIR) commenced a **daily 30-minute live bilingual program titled “Lokprasarak Ke Saath Loknirnya 2024”** from 17.03.2024, focusing on voter awareness and disseminating election-related news. The program features updates on election activities, regional insights, expert analysis, and appeals to listeners to ensure their vote counts.

- 1.5 The Press Information Bureau (PIB) has introduced a **Media Facilitation Portal** for comprehensive information on the General Election 2024. Additionally, PIB launched a dedicated microsite at <https://pib.gov.in/elect2024/index.aspx>, serving as a one-stop facilitation portal for media personnel covering the General Election 2024. The microsite includes several features aimed at enhancing the reporting experience for journalists and media professionals during the election period.

## 2. **INITIATIVES FOR EASE OF DOING BUSINESS**

- 2.1 **Prasar Bharati – Shared Audio Visuals for Broadcast and Dissemination (PB-SHABD)**: The Hon'ble Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Shri Anurag Thakur, inaugurated PB-SHABD on 13.03.2024 at the National Media Centre, New Delhi. PB-SHABD is a **news sharing service** by Prasar Bharati, DD News, Akashvani News, and the updated News on AIR mobile app, offering clean feed news stories in major Indian languages across fifty categories. This service is available free of cost for the first year as an introductory offer. Details are accessible at <https://shabd.prasarbharati.org/>.

- 2.2 **Online Certification System under the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024**: Following the Cinematograph (Amendment) Act, 2023, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting notified the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024 on 15.03.2024, replacing the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 1983. These rules aim to enhance **transparency, efficiency, and ease of doing business in the Film Industry** by introducing online certification processes, eliminating transactional time, and implementing Priority Screening of Films. Key improvements include **provisions for Accessibility features** to make films inclusive for disabled persons, **age-based certification categories** (UA 7+, UA 13+, UA 16+), and greater representation of women in the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) Board and Advisory Panels.

- 2.3 **Press and Registration of Periodicals Rules, 2024 and Press Sewa Portal**: The Press and Registration of Periodicals Rules, 2024 were notified on 01.03.2024, along with the commencement of the Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023 from the same date. The new Act introduces an online system to facilitate the registration of newspapers and periodicals in India, replacing the previous manual, multi-step processes that caused hardships for

publishers. The Press Sewa Portal ([presssewa.prgi.gov.in](http://presssewa.prgi.gov.in)) of the Press Registrar General of India has been launched with a user-friendly interface to receive applications as mandated by the new Act.

### 3. **INITIATIVES UNDER AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV**

- 3.1 **Launch of “Swaraj” Season on Amazon Prime:** The Hon’ble Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Shri Anurag Thakur, launched the first season of “Swaraj” on Amazon Prime OTT platform in Mumbai on 12.03.2024. Originally launched in August 2022 on Doordarshan under the “Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav” campaign, “Swaraj” narrates the stories of countless heroes of India’s freedom struggle and their indomitable courage.
- 3.2 **Announcement of “Sardar: The Game Changer” on Doordarshan:** The launch of a new 52-episode serial titled “Sardar: The Game Changer” by Doordarshan was announced on 10.03.2024 to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- 3.2 **Amrit Mahotsav Celebrations Courses by FTII:** The Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) concluded the series of 75 courses under the Amrit Mahotsav Celebrations (AMC) Courses initiative with a course specifically for **participants from the Scheduled Tribes community** across various States/UTs. The final AMC Basic Course in Smartphone Film Making (offline) took place at Jashpur in collaboration with the Tribal Department of Chattisgarh State Government from 29th February to 4th March 2024, with the participation of 27 ST candidates. These AMC courses, conducted free of cost for ST candidates, have been instrumental in promoting inclusivity and diversity in the field of filmmaking.

### 4. **INITIATIVES ON MINIMUM GOVERNMENT MAXIMUM GOVERNANCE**

- 4.1 **Guidelines for Accessibility Standards in Public Exhibition of Feature Films:** The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting issued the "Guidelines of Accessibility Standards in the Public Exhibition of Feature Films in Cinema Theatres for Persons with Hearing and Visual Impairment" on 15.03.2024. These guidelines aim to ensure the **accessibility of films to persons with hearing and visual impairments**. Feature films intended for public exhibition in cinema halls for commercial purposes are required to comply with these guidelines within 6 months for films certified in more than one language, and within 2 years for all others. The Accessibility Standards mandate the provision of at least one accessibility feature each for the hearing impaired and visually impaired, including **Closed Captioning and Audio Description**. Licensees of cinema theatres are required to deploy **customized equipment in theatres, mobile apps**, or other available technologies during regular shows.

4.2 **Community Radio Stations (CRS):** The Ministry commissioned six (06) new Community Radio Stations (CRSs) and signed one (01) new Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA), along with renewing nine (09) GOPAs during the month.

4.3 **Channel Licensing:** The Ministry of I&B granted permissions for three (03) new channels and accepted the surrender request/cancellation of one (01) channel during the month. As of 31.03.2024, the total number of **private satellite TV channels** authorized for up-linking and downlinking in India stands at **912**.

## 5. **CONTENT REGULATION**

5.1 **Blocking of 18 OTT Platforms Streaming Vulgar Content:** The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, in coordination with various intermediaries, has taken action to block 18 OTT platforms for publishing obscene, vulgar, 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** of these platforms have been disabled for public access in India due to prima facie violations of the IT Act, Indian Penal Code, and Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act.

5.2 **Blocking under Section 69A of IT Act:** Under Section 69A of the IT Act, directions were issued to block 35 accounts, 34 URLs on social media, and 1 website URL. Additionally, orders were issued for unblocking 1 social media account.

5.3 **Examination of Web-Series Content by DPCGC:** In response to a complaint, the Digital Publishers Content Governance Council (DPCGC), a self-regulatory body of OTT platforms, was requested to examine and issue appropriate directions regarding a web-series streaming on the **ALT Balaji OTT platform**. The DPCGC has informed that edits have been made to certain scenes containing sex and nudity without contextual justification.

5.4 **Advisory on Promotion of Online Betting and Gambling:** An advisory was issued on 21.03.2024, urging endorsers and influencers on social media to refrain from promoting offshore online betting and gambling platforms. Social media intermediaries were advised to conduct sensitization efforts among users to discourage the publication of such content.

5.5 **Content Regulation on Private Satellite TV Channels:** Following a meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee under the Cable Television Network (Amendment) Rule 2021, two advisories and one warning was issued to private satellite TV channels for violations of the Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks Act, 1995.

6. The **inaugural session of 24<sup>th</sup> edition of FICCI Frames 2024** was held in Mumbai on 05.03.2024, which was attended by the Hon'ble Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of Maharashtra, Sh. Mangal Prabhat Lodha, along with Actor Ms. Rani Mukherjee and senior representatives from FICCI. Secretary, the Ministry of I&B delivered a special address on the occasion, during which the contributions of the Media & Entertainment (M&E) sector in India were acknowledged and Policies and Initiatives taken by the Government of India to promote the sector were highlighted.
7. **CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY (08.03.2024)**
  - 7.1 An all-around publicity through various media platforms was provided for the **Hon'ble Prime Minister's participation in the Sashakt Nari - Viksit Bharat programme** on 11.03.2024. The Hon'ble PM's announcement on Women's Day regarding the reduction in LPG cylinder prices received significant coverage in electronic and print media.
  - 7.2 The Main Secretariat of the Ministry organized various competitions such as **Essay Writing, MCQs, Poster Making, and Slogan Writing for women officers/officials** of the Ministry leading up to International Women's Day. The winners of these competitions were felicitated at an event held at the National Media Centre, New Delhi, on 08.03.2024. Similar activities were organized by various Media Units/organizations of the Ministry.
  - 7.3 The Ministry organized a multi-stakeholder **roundtable discussion on "Gender Sensitization – Portrayal of Women in India"** at Hotel Ashok, Delhi, on 11.03.2024, moderated by Primus Partners Pvt. Ltd. The panel included Ms. Neerja Sekhar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of I&B, and speakers from Prasar Bharati, FICCI, UN Women, Netflix, Warner Bros. Discovery, UNICEF, BAG Films & Media Ltd., Radio Mewat, Times of India, Equilibrio Advisory LLP, Fever FM, Ms. Anupriya Goenka (Actress), and Primus Partners.
  - 7.4 The National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) conducted a hybrid panel discussion on '**Women in Cinema: Shaping Global Narratives**' with five women speakers from different countries, including one from India.
  - 7.5 NSD: AIR broadcasted a discussion on "**Government's Efforts and Initiatives for Economic Empowerment of Women**" on 11.03.2024. Publications Division (DPD) posted creatives highlighting books on impactful women across all social media platforms on the occasion of Women's Day.
8. Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute (SRFTI), in association with the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) and the National Film Archives of India (NFAI), organized **ARCUREA 2024** – an International Event on film archiving,

curation, and restoration of films, held from 16th to 22nd March 2024 at SRFTI, Kolkata. The event was a comprehensive academic engagement with cinema, featuring an **'International Colloquium on Archiving and Restoration'**, a cinema curation workshop for students focusing on Indian cinema, a festival showcasing restored films by NFDC-NFAI, special screenings of films from curated packages, exhibitions displaying film memorabilia, live performances, and a Commemoration lecture.

## 9. SPECIAL COVERAGE/ARTICLES/ BOOKLETS

- 9.1 The interactions of the Hon'ble Prime Minister with citizens during various state-level Viksit Bharat programs were effectively amplified through media coverage. Notable programs in March 2024 included those held with citizens in Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, North East, and West Bengal. DD News telecasted a special weekly program titled **'Nextgen Bharat'** to showcase India's growth story across different sectors. The New Media Wing (NMW) played a pivotal role in disseminating the **Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY)** on social media platforms, sharing video bytes, images, and graphics using hashtags such as **#HamaraSankalpViksitBharat** and **#ViksitBharatSankalpYatra**.
- 9.2 Prasar Bharati and Press Information Bureau (PIB) provided live coverage and extensive publicity to **significant events attended by the Hon'ble President, Vice President, and Prime Minister of India**, including the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships and Awards for the years 2022 & 2023, National Creators Award, Startup Mahakumbh, Republic Summit 2024, and the launch of the PM-SURAJ National Portal.
- 9.3 The March 2024 editions of **New India Samachar (NIS)** featured cover stories on the *"Development Journey of the Last Decade"* and *"Vikas Rath becomes Vishwas Rath"*. Published in 13 languages, NIS was distributed nationwide by the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC).

## 10. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF MEDIA UNITS

- 10.1 **Press Information Bureau (PIB):** PIB and its regional offices issued over **5,180 Press Releases** in English, Hindi, and 14 regional languages, and conducted **2 Vartalaps**. To enhance awareness about various Central Government Schemes and initiatives among citizens, approximately **70 significant articles** under 'Special Themes' were published, resulting in about 350 clippings across the country. The PIB Fact Check Unit **debunked 37 fake news items and posted 50 tweets**.
- 10.2 **Central Bureau of Communication (CBC):** During the month, CBC executed a comprehensive outreach strategy, releasing **32 strip advertisements** in leading newspapers and one print advertisement on the development of West Bengal, each highlighting crucial themes of the **Government's flagship**

**schemes.** Integrated Communication & Outreach Programmes (ICOPs), field programmes, and awareness campaigns were conducted by Regional Offices (ROs)/Field Offices (FOs) of CBC across the country on themes such as Hamara Sankalp Viksit Bharat, Ayushman Bharat, Aadhaar Camps, PM Awas Camps, Ujwala Scheme, etc.

- 10.3 **Social Media Coverage:** The social media handles of the Ministry provided extensive coverage and publicity to various themes by disseminating around **284 unique graphics**, videos, reels, images, posts, tweets, etc. These efforts aimed to engage and inform the public about key initiatives and events, fostering broader awareness and participation across digital platforms. Campaigns such as **Mera Pehla Vote, Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, National Creators Awards**, Citizenship Amendment Act, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Blue Flag Beaches, MIB Podcast, MIBePositive, and Weeknama were highlighted through infographics, reels, audio, and video content



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