

Feedback/comments on Draft Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing with Prasar Bharati) (Amendment) Bill, 2018

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

New Delhi

Date: 17th October, 2018

The Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing With Prasar Bharati) Act, 2007 (In short Sports Act) was enacted by the Parliament with an objective to provide access to the largest number of listeners and viewers, on a free to air basis, of sporting events of national importance through mandatory sharing of sports broadcasting signals with Prasar Bharati, through Doordarshan channels. Section 3(1) of the Sports Act reads as under:

“No content rights owner or holder and no television or radio broadcasting service provider shall carry a live television broadcast on any cable or Direct-to-Home network or radio commentary broadcast in India of sporting events of national importance, unless it simultaneously shares the live broadcasting signal, without its advertisements, with the Prasar Bharati to enable them to re-transmit the same on its terrestrial networks and Direct-to-Home networks in such manner and on such terms and conditions as may be specified”.

2. The Sub-section 8(1) of “The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 provides that:

“the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify the names of Doordarshan channels or the channels operated by or on behalf of Parliament, to be mandatorily carried by the cable operators in their cable service and the manner of reception and re-transmission of such channels”.

3. In exercise of powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 8 of the Cable Television networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, the Central Government has specified ‘DD National’ and ‘DD Sports’ as channels to be mandatorily carried by the cable operators.

4. However, as per provisions of the Sports Act, the live feed received by Prasar Bharati from the content rights owners or holders, is only for the purpose of re-transmission of the said signals on Doordarshan's own Terrestrial and DTH network (DD FreeDish) and not for Cable Operators/other networks. As such, the viewers, who do not have DD FreeDish or Doordarshan's terrestrial network, are either unable to watch these sporting events of national importance or are compelled to watch these sporting events on highly priced sports channels and thus, the very objective with which the Parliament had enacted the Sports Act, has been defeated.

5. Accordingly, with a view to ensure access to the largest number of viewers, on a free to air basis, of sporting events of national importance through mandatory sharing of sports broadcasting signals with Prasar Bharati, this Ministry proposes to amend the Section 3(1) of the Sports Act to ensure the mandatory sharing of the signals of the sporting events of national importance, to other networks, where it is mandatory to show Doordarshan Channels as per Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. In this background, it is proposed that the existing entries (*reproduced above*) in the Section 3 (1) of the Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing with Prasar Bharati) Act, 2007, may be substituted, with the following entries: –

“No content rights owner or holder and no television or radio broadcasting service provider shall carry a live television broadcast on any cable and/or Direct-to-Home network and/or IPTV and/or terrestrial network or radio commentary broadcast in India of sporting events of national importance, unless it simultaneously shares the live broadcasting signal, without its advertisements, with the Prasar Bharati to enable them to re-transmit the same on its own terrestrial network and Direct-to-Home network and on other television distribution platforms/networks where is it mandatory to broadcast mandatory channels notified by the Union Government under Section 8 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 in such manner and on such terms and conditions as may be specified.”

6. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting solicits feedback/ comments from General Public/Stakeholders on the **Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing with Prasar Bharti) (Amendment) Bill, 2018.**

7. The feedback/ comments can be given by email at the email ID harcharan.kaur@nic.in or by post at the following address:

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8. The feedback/comments may be given within a period of thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.