

**All State Information Minister's Conference held on 5.12.09 at New Delhi.
Chaired by Tmt. Ambika Soni, Hon'ble Union Minister for Information and
Broadcasting**

SIMCON XXVII

**Address of Hon'ble Minister for Information, Govt. of Tamil Nadu,
Thiru. Parithi Ellamvazhuthi.**

Hon'ble Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Hon'ble Information Ministers from all over the country, Secretaries to the Governments and other dignitaries.

I feel honoured by the invitation to participate in this 27th Conference of Ministers of Information & Cinematography of State Governments and Union Territories convened by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. I am happy to convey the greetings and good wishes of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr.Kalaignar to all of you.

Our beloved leader, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has enabled our state to make rapid strides in every department of our state. In this modern, demanding world, Tamil Nadu state marches ahead at a remarkable pace towards the goal of successful and overall growth.

1. Prevention of Video Piracy

The Video Piracy Cell, CB CID was formed in 1995 to tackle the video piracy offences especially to check violations relating to the Copyright Act, under the direct control of Additional Director General of Police, Crime. At present, the Video Piracy Cell is functioning with 12 Units with the strength of 1 Superintendent of Police, 1 Deputy Superintendent of Police, 12 Inspectors, 14 Sub-Inspectors and 76 other ranks.

The main objective of the Video Piracy Cell is to prevent the menace of piracy offences and the circulation of unauthorized CDs of new films which cause huge revenue loss to the film industry as well as the Government. The Video Piracy Cell, CB CID since its commencement from 1995 has detected 11,084 cases and seized property worth about Rs.79 crores. Cases have been registered for the offences of

selling pirated CDs/ DVDs, circulation of pornographic films which spoil the minds of the youth and instigate them to commit crimes against women, for telecasting unauthorized cinema materials in local Cable TVs, for software and book piracy.

The film industry is facing a severe crisis because of the prevalence of Video Piracy which results in audience staying away from theatres and loss of revenue to Government. Apart from this, the prevalence of video piracy results in confrontation between the various sections of the public and the film producers, distributors etc. As Video Piracy is an act prejudicial to the maintenance of public order, the State Government have amended the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Bootleggers, Drug offenders, Forest offenders, Goondas, Immoral Traffic Offenders and Slum grabbers Act, 1982 (Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982) with effect from 01.10.2004 so as to enable the authorities concerned to detain any Video Pirate under the said Act. So far 57 notorious pirates were detained under the above said Act.

To curb Video Piracy, several other Acts such as Copyright Act, 1957, Tamil Nadu Exhibition of Films on Television Screen through VCR and Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1984 and the Cinematography Act, 1952 are also invoked. Smuggling of pirated DVDs and VCDs in and out of our State has been curbed to a great extent in coordination with the customs authorities at airports and seaports.

1 (a) . Difficulties faced by the Video Piracy Cell

- i) Most of the pirated CDs' master-prints are imported from abroad as its foreign rights are given simultaneously by the producers concerned at the time of releasing the film.
- ii) On other occasions, the new movies are downloaded from Internet or shot in theatres in late hours through handy cameras/cell phones.
- iii) Master prints of new films are copied in computer chips, memory cards, pen drives, etc. and transported to the destination by the culprits.
- iv) It is a difficult task to keep pace with advanced scientific technologies growing day by day in Piracy Offences and to evaluate the genuineness of

CDs, computers, writing machinery, memory cards, wrapper sheets involved in video piracy offences.

A more stringent law to eradicate video piracy is the need of the hour for the entertainment industry, one of the fastest growing industries in the country.

2. Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill

On this occasion, I convey the Government of Tamil Nadu's support to the proposal of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India to legislate the Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill.

3. Press & Registration of Books Act 1867

We welcome the amendments being proposed to Press & Registration of Books Act 1867 such as

- a) The new title of the Act is proposed as Press and Registration of Publications (PRP) Act, 2009 as books are not registered under PRB Act.
- b) Preamble of the Act would be modified to insert provisions on FDI including Syndication, Facsimile Edition and Indian Edition of Foreign Publications.
- c) New definitions such as 'publications', 'newspapers', 'magazines' etc. would be included as earlier there was no separate definition for magazines.
- d) Timely de-registration of titles that are not being published.
- e) To prevent blocking of titles and discourage non-serious publishers by making a clear provision for verification of titles.
- f) Making statutory provision for circulation verification.
- g) Filing of annual statements to be made compulsory.

- h) More powers to Press Registrar and
- i) Introduction of penal provisions for violation of guidelines of the Act and empowering the Press Registrar to take action where the District Magistrate fails to do so.

3 (a) . Registration of Books

The Director of Information and Public Relations is the Registrar of Books in the state. Every publisher is obliged to send two copies of each publication to Registrar of Books. Only after such registration, the publisher can apply for supplying books to public libraries and Govt. institutions. 836 new books have been registered from January till November this year.

4. Digitalization of the Cable Sector – Way Forward

As per the recommendations of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to improve the quality of the cable television in India, cable TV operators in the country will have to digitalize their services with emphasis on new generation network and quality of service. This would also ensure accountability in terms of the subscriber base as it is an inherent addressable system. TRAI has also suggested some remedies, which the 70,000 cable operators in the country would welcome, in the wake of competition from Direct-to-Home and Internet Protocol Television etc. Restructuring of Cable TV Services provide for setting up digital cable networks as against the analog services offered by majority of the cable operators currently.

To meet the latest challenges, the existing Cable TV industry must widen its scope so as to provide value added services like broadband, video on demand, movie on demand, etc. Availability of broadband internet and cable television over an Optical Fibre Network could pave the way for providing television, internet and telephone solutions to subscribers. If the TRAI guidelines for the digitalization of cable television networks are implemented, broadband internet services will possibly be beamed across India through cable TV. This would be a welcome feature as it may facilitate the rural folk of the country to experience the broadband services at an affordable price.

TRAI's recommendations have also suggested for a licensing authority and appellate authority and a subscriber complaint redressal mechanism, which would be a desirable feature.

New technologies always usher in development. The Government of Tamil Nadu is committed as ever to development in all sectors. The digitalization of the cable sector is the way forward and will provide avenues for the cable TV operators to keep up with other new players. The new system will also facilitate the Governmental efforts in the formidable task of publicity of all welfare and development schemes.

5. Entertainment Tax

The Government is doing its best to promote the growth of the cinema industry by reducing the entertainment tax rates for films from 54% to 40% in 1989, to 25% in 2000 and now to 15% in respect of new films and 10% in respect of old films in municipal corporations and special grade municipalities and 10% in respect of old films (more than 10 years old) or new films in other areas.

The entertainment tax has been completely waived for films named in Tamil with effect from 22.7.2006.

I am very happy and grateful for this opportunity to voice our opinions and make suggestions. Thank you All.

Vanakkam.

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