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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (MIB)

Q: The I&B Ministry is the nodal body for broadcasting in India. Please explain what kind of role MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING plays?

Suryakant Pandit, Orissa

Ans.: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) is the nodal ministry to issue broadcasting and cable services related license, permission and registration. The services include television (TV) broadcasters, FM broadcasters and the various Distribution Platform Operators (DPOs). These service providers are governed by different Guidelines/Act issued by the Government. Broadly, MIB grants permissions for the various broadcasting services and the subsequent permissions to the existing service providers while serving the license, as per the following:

1. Permission for uplinking/ downlinking of TV Channels;
2. Permission for setting up of uplinking Hub/Teleport/SNG/DSNG;
3. License to Direct-To-Home (DTH) operators;
4. Permission to Headend-In-The-Sky (HITS) operators;
5. Registration to Multi-System Operators (MSOs);
6. Permission for uplinking/ downlinking of TV Channels;
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6. Registration to Local Cable Operators (LCOs) (by Head Post Office);
7. Permission for operating Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) services;
8. Permission for setting up FM Radio Station and Community Radio Stations (CRS);
9. Registration of Television Rating Points (TRP) Agencies;
10. Permission for temporary uplinking;
11. Permission for uplinking by the Indian News Agency;
12. Renewal of existing permissions;
13. Transfer of permission of television channels;
14. Permission for change in name, language, genre, logo, format of television channels;
15. Permission for change in the teleport, satellite of television channels;
16. Permission for Merger/ De-Merger/ Amalgamation;
17. Action for non-compliance/breach of terms and conditions of the license;
18. Surrender of license/permission/registration;
19. Cancellation/Revocation of license/permission/registration;

In addition to MIB, these permissions involve clearances from other ministries and departments. This inter-alia includes Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for security clearance, Department of Space (DOS) for clearance of satellite use, Wireless Planning and Coordination (WPC) for frequency assignment and National Operations and Control (NOCC) for network clearances. Further, there is requirement of net-worth verification by empaneled auditors of MIB for permission for uplinking and downlinking of TV channels. Additionally, for downlinking permission, the application is forwarded to the Department of Revenue for verification to conclude agreements on advertising, subscription revenue and programme content between the applicant (downlinking) company and the channel owner, in case the two are different entities.