



Press Council of India
New Delhi

Sub-Committee to Examine the Issue of Advertisement

CAMP

Lucknow

(Gurinder Singh)
Convenor

(Prabhat Kumar Dash)
Member

COMMITTEE REPORT TO EXAMINE THE ISSUE OF ADVERTISEMENT - UTTAR PRADESH

The Council in its meeting held on December 19, 2014 while considering the issue threats/problems being faced by the Medium and Small newspapers for non-adoption of the Model Advertisement/Accreditation Rules-2014 framed by the Press Council had constituted a two member Sub-Committee to examine the issue of Advertisement comprising of S/Shri Gurinder Singh as Convenor and Prabhat Kumar Dash, Member.

The Sub-Committee visited Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow on May 2-3, 2016 and invited stakeholders from Big, Small and Medium newspapers as well as the authorities of the State Government of Uttar Pradesh to interact simultaneously on May 2, 2016 across the table to avoid communication gap and follow the principle of transparency.

About 90-100 Stakeholders from Big, Small and Medium newspapers and Nodal Officer appointed by the Government of Uttar Pradesh namely Shri Sanjay Rai, Deputy Director, Information and Public Relations Department along with his team of officers were present in the Conference Hall, Information & Public Relations Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow.

DEPOSITION

The stakeholders from Small & Medium Newspapers submitted that there is no Advertisement Policy in the State for last 20 years and the Information & Public Relations Department distributed advertisements on their own whims. They submitted that the government invites suggestion from the newspapers and association for changing the advertisement policy, but no result has been achieved.

PCI's Advertisement policy has not been adopted by the State Government. They submitted that Government Order is there for issuing 70% budget of the Advertisement to Small & Medium Newspapers, but it is not being followed by the Department of Information & Public Relations Department.

They submitted that the Committee constituted by the government to modify or amend the old advertisement policy is invalid because there are no representations from the organizations which are notified by the Press Council of India. They submitted that the newspapers which are empanelled by DAVP are getting new rates whereas the DIPR is not revising the rates.

They informed that there is no policy for checking of newspaper which are vernacular specially Urdu papers. People bring out Urdu newspapers just to get Government Advertisements. A large number of fake newspapers got the advertisements due to inefficiency of the information and public relations department. They submitted that there must be specific qualification for bringing out a vernacular newspaper.

The state government do their own circulation checking and do not approve RNI Verification of circulation of newspaper.

They submitted that the Department of Information & Public Relations have a budget of 150 crores per year but a major part of the budget allocated for the print media is consumed by the Big Newspapers or electronic media.

They further submitted that Survival of Small & Medium Newspapers is not possible if they will not get sufficient advertisements from the government.

They also submitted that government has withdrawn the facility of bus pass from the accredited journalists for outside state. There are limited medical facilities for the journalists in the state and if they are seriously ill they are denied admission in PGIs.

Many of the journalists were upset as they were denied passes to attend Vidhan Sabha to cover the proceedings. The editors also demanded for Identity Card not for the purpose of receiving facilities as of journalists but for identification purpose only.

FINDINGS

1. Resentment in totality of the stakeholders in lack of formation of the new advertisement policy of the State Government of Uttar Pradesh.
2. Priority is not being given to other language newspapers while releasing advertisements.
3. Weekly, fortnightly and monthly newspapers are not being considered for Government classified advertisements.
4. Small & Medium Newspapers are not being considered for display advertisements.
5. Payment of Advertisement bills is not being made within a specified time.
6. The total budget sanctioned for advertisements in Rupees is not being utilized in the ratio of 50%, 35% and 15% for Big, Medium and Small newspapers respectively.
7. No representation of the Press Bodies in the newly constituted Inter Departmental Committee.
8. There are three slabs for distributing of Advertisements:
 - (i) General List : 15th August, 02nd October and 26th January
 - (ii) Short List : Two Advertisements in a week
 - (iii) Middle List : One Advertisement in a week
9. Advertisements are issued through Agencies
10. Electronic media taking the major share of the advertisement budget.
11. Lack of medical facilities in districts.

GOVERNMENT VIEW

While interacting with the Sub-Committee Shri Sudhesh Kumar Ojha, Director, Information & Public Relations Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh informed the Sub-Committee that there are so many unions in Uttar Pradesh and it is very difficult for them to assess who is original and who is fake. He has informed that they will redress the problems of the newspapers by simplifying the procedure. He agreed to include suggestion of the Sub-Committee in their Advertisement Policy.

Shri Ojha informed that the procedure for issuing advertisements has always been transparent and necessary amendments as required will be made on the directions given by the Committee.

The Director informed the Committee that they will clear pending cases of empanelment as well as pending bills of the newspapers as soon as possible.

Shri Ojha assured that the government is providing free transportation facility in roadways buses to journalists accredited at the district and State levels and a government order will be issued soon after necessary amendments to facilitate free transport on roadways buses for district level reporters to go outside the State also.

He further apprised the Committee that the state government is taking all possible steps for the welfare of journalists. The journalist's welfare fund had been increased and special care is taken of medium and small newspapers in advertisements released periodically. He has also apprised the committee that they are going to increase the budget for PGI facilities to other journalists who are working outside Lucknow.

Shri Ojha also informed the Sub-Committee that process is underway to implement the pension scheme as directed by the Chief Minister for journalists aged above 60 years. The State is also in the process of granting heritage status to recognized newspapers which are being published before the State's formation.

The Committee met the Secretary, Information Shri Navneet Sehgal. He welcomed the Sub-Committee and after elaborate discussions assured to frame the State Advertisement Policy as per the Model Guidelines of Press Council of India. He instructed the department officials to follow the PCI pattern. He also agreed on revision of rates for the Advertisements. He requested the Press Council of India to give some guidelines on multiple number of publications being published from the same house, these types of publications are eating the advertisement share of genuine players of the trade, he observed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Advertisement Policy should be prepared in conformity with the Model Advertisement Rules-2014 prepared by the Press Council of India.
2. Advertisement rates should be revised after a specific period of time.
4. The Information & Public Relations Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh should follow the directions/suggestions/rules/acts of the RNI and DAVP in case of circulation figures and rate contract, in letter and spirit.
5. The total budget sanctioned in rupees for advertisements should be distributed in the ration of 50% for Big, 35% for Medium and 15% for Small Newspapers, which has been totally ignored by the Information & Public Relations Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh.
6. Representation of Members of Press Bodies notified by the Press Council of India should be included in the inter departmental Committees.
7. The newspaper/periodicals specially Small & Medium Newspapers which have played a significant role in progress of the State should be considered in "Special Category" and to be provided extra facilities.
8. The minutes of the proceedings with the Committee of the Press Council should be put on the website so as the stakeholders can follow the developments of the directions given to the department.



(Gurinder Singh)
Convenor



(Prabhat Kumar Dash)
Member