



Changes in Cable Television Network Rules

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Why in News

The central government issued a **notification** amending the **Cable Television Network Rules, 1994** thereby providing a **statutory mechanism for redressal of grievances/complaints** of citizens.

These grievances/complaints are related to content broadcast by television channels in accordance with the provisions of the **Cable Television Network Act, 1995**.

Key Points

- **About the Notification:** The notification issues **Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021**.
It provides for a **three-level grievance redressal mechanism** — self-regulation by **broadcasters**, self-regulation by the **self-regulating bodies** of the broadcasters, and oversight by an Inter-Departmental Committee at the level of the **Union government**.

- **Significance Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021:**
 - Various **Self-regulatory bodies** like News Broadcasters Standards Authority (NBSA) and Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) will **get legal recognition**.
 - **At present**, there is an **institutional mechanism** by way of an **Inter-Ministerial Committee** to address grievances of citizens relating to violation of the Programme/Advertising Codes under the Rules.
 - Various **broadcasters** have also developed their **internal self-regulatory mechanism** for addressing grievances.
 - There are **over 900 television channels** that have been granted permission by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB).

The recent notification is significant as it paves the way for a strong **institutional system for redressing grievances** while placing **accountability and responsibility on the broadcasters** and their self-regulating bodies.
 - This will bring the television's self-regulatory mechanism **at par with that being set-up for OTT players and digital news publishers**, as envisaged in the **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021**.
- **Cable Television Network Act, 1995:**
 - **Objective:** The Act aimed at **regulating content and operation** of cable networks. This Act regulates the '**haphazard mushrooming** of cable television networks'.
 - **Important Provisions:**
 - **Section 2:** Under the Act, district magistrates, sub-divisional magistrates and police commissioners are the '**authorised officers**' to ensure that the Programme Code is not breached.
 - **Section 3:** No person shall operate a cable television network unless he is registered as a cable operator under this Act.
 - **Section 4A:** It is obligatory for cable operators to transmit programmes of any channel in an encrypted form through a digital addressable system when the centre asks them to do so.
 - **Section 16:** Whoever contravenes any of the provisions of this Act shall be punishable.
 - **Section 19:** Authorised officer has power to prohibit transmission of certain programmes in public interest if it promotes, disharmony or feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between different religious, racial, linguistic or regional groups or castes or communities.
 - **Section 20:** Parliament has power to prohibit operation of cable television networks in public interest.

Source: IE