

PRESS RELEASE

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New Delhi: January 13, 2022The News Broadcasters and Digital Association's (NBDA) stands vindicated as the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MoI&B) recognises the need for improvement, acknowledges the deficiencies, the need to urgently increase sample size and systemic corrections.

NBDA also appreciates the reforms that are being undertaken to make the processes, protocols and oversight mechanism at BARC India more robust. It is heartening that the Ministry acknowledged that the ratings system for TV news had deficiencies and took note of the suggestions made by NBDA. The reconstitution of the BARC Board and the Technical Committee to allow for the induction of independent members, along with the setting up of a permanent oversight committee, are all steps in the right direction. After the unearthing of the TRP scam by Mumbai Police in October 2020, the NBDA had asked BARC India to overhaul its systems before resuming the release of TV news ratings.

We note the Ministry's decision to set up a Joint Working Group under the Chairmanship of Prasar Bharti CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati to study the potential for leveraging Return Path Data (RPD) from set top boxes. We look forward to working with it on the crucial issue of RPD.

We look forward to working with the Committee. NBDA hopes that this will ensure that the data collected for viewership measurement is more authentic and real time.

While NBDA recognizes that a number of reforms are being undertaken at BARC, there is still room to make systems more transparent, robust and reliable. BARC should also evaluate ways to enhance data security and ensure that there is no manual intervention at any step in the ratings process. We hope before any ratings are released, these measures are in place. We will continue to work with all stakeholders on refining the Outlier Policy to eliminate statistical anomalies and increasing the sample size to strengthen the credibility of data.



Annie Joseph
Secretary General