**DELHI HIGH COURT DELHI HIGH COURT HAS SOUGHT RESPONSES FROM THE NEWS BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION (NBA) AND THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENT CASE**

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has moved the Delhi High Court against excessive advertisements by news channels. The Delhi High Court has sought responses from the News Broadcasters Association (NBA) and the Central government on the TRAI plea.

TRAI has contended that it has received several complaints from consumers about their viewing experience because of excessive advertisement on various television channels.

TRAI has filed an intervention application in a petition filed by NBA challenging rule 7(11) of Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 (CTN/Cable TV Rules). The NBA has argued that the rule is ultra vires to the freedom of speech and expression guaranteed by the constitution. The said rule states that:

No programme shall carry advertisements exceeding twelve minutes per hour, which may include up to ten minutes per hour of commercial advertisements and up to two minutes per hour of a channel’s self-promotional programmes.”

Advocate Maneesha Dhir representing TRAI told the Bench of Chief Justice DN Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh that it is already a respondent in a bunch of similar petitions challenging the Standards of Quality of Service (Duration of Advertisement in Television Channels) Regulations 2012 and Standards of Quality of Service (Duration of Advertisement in Television Channels)(Amendment) Regulation 2013.

TRAI in its intervention application has said that Cable Television Network Rules were brought in by the parliament therefore, “there is a statutory mandate regarding maximum duration of advertisement that can be shown in an hour”. Further, TRAI should be allowed to assist the court in adjudication of the NBA’s petition since its outcome will affect the regulations framed by it.

On the other hand, news broadcasters have contended that TRAI has no power to regulate the length of advertisement on TV channels and “regulating advertisement is nothing but regulating free commercial speech guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution”.

The Court has ordered NBA and the Center to respond to TRAI’s intervention application. The Court has clubbed this petition with several other pending petition before it. The matter is posted for December 23, 2021.