

No.TS/4/2020-Title (RNI)
Office of Registrar of Newspapers for India
(M/o Information & Broadcasting)
9th Floor, Soochna Bhawan, CGO Complex,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003.

Dated 08/09/2020

NOTICE TO PUBLISHERS

Subject: Title Verification Guidelines reg.

The Title verification guidelines as amended on 08.09.2020 by the competent authority is attached. Following may kindly be noted:

- (i) The amended guidelines will be effective from today (i.e. 08.09.2020), except for (ii) below
- (ii) The Clause 16(a) of the guidelines shall be effective from 01st January 2021 or, if notified otherwise
- (iii) The guidelines are now made available in Urdu, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Odia, Assamese, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam and Tamil languages, in addition to Hindi and English.


(Joyce Philip)

Asst. Press Registrar

No. TS/4/2020-Title(RNI)
Government of India
Office of the Registrar of Newspapers for India
(Ministry of Information & Broadcasting)
9th Floor, Soochna Bhawan, CGO Complex,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003

Date: 8th September, 2020

GUIDELINES FOR VERIFICATION OF TITLES FOR NEWSPAPERS

- (1) Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 provides for registration of ‘newspapers’ which is defined as “ any printed periodical work containing public news or comment on public news”
- (2) Any person desirous of publishing a newspaper shall file a declaration with the specified authority, along with the proposed Title(s) of the newspaper. The specified authority will authenticate the said declaration after ascertaining from Press Registrar that the proposed Title is not :
 - a) Same or similar in a State in any language, or
 - b) Same or similar to an existing Title, in the same language in whole of India.
- (3) Before applying for Title verification, the applicant should check the exhaustive list of verified Titles available at the link ‘**Verified Titles/Title Search**’ **Menu on RNI website**, and ensure that the proposed Titles are not same or similar to those already verified by RNI. While the Titles appearing on the website of RNI are those that have already been verified, **it does not imply that the Title(s) which are not in the list of verified Titles are necessarily available.**

The final authority of approving or rejecting a Title is vested in Press Registrar.

- (4) Application for Title verification of newspapers/ periodicals is through Online Mode only. The Application Form (in the enclosed format) is on the website of RNI i.e <http://www.rni.nic.in>. A print of the same may be forwarded through the

Specified Authority (District Magistrate/Executive Magistrate of the district concerned) to RNI.

- (5) The seal and signature of the specified authority forwarding the application should be clear and legible on every page of the Title application.
- (6) Only original copies of the Title application forwarded by the District Magistrate/specified authority will be processed in RNI for Title verification. **Photocopies will not be entertained.** Any tampering or usage of white fluid or cancellation/rewriting will not be allowed in the Title application.
- (7) In case more than one language is mentioned in an application it will be presumed that the application is for bilingual/multilingual newspaper and will be verified accordingly.
- (8) A newspaper or publication may be in one language, it may be bilingual or multilingual. When the publication is bilingual or multilingual, it should contain news/articles in all the languages in which the Title has been verified. If separate publication is to be brought out in different languages, separate applications should be submitted for each publication.
- (9) **If new edition of an existing publication is to be brought out from another district in the same state and in the same language, no prior Title verification is required.** The publisher may directly file declaration and then submit required documents to RNI for issuance of Registration number and Certificate. However if the proposed new edition is from another state or in a different language (within the same or another state), prior Title verification is required.
- (10) An applicant who owns a Title in a specific language, state and periodicity does not have any natural claim over the ownership of that Title in another language, state and periodicity.
- (11) The verification of the pre-owned Title for another state, language or periodicity will be subject to availability as per guidelines.
- (12) Such applicants who have registered publications already in their name in RNI records should ensure that the **latest Annual Statement for the registered publication/s is duly filed in the office of RNI before applying for fresh Title(s).**

- (13) Applications for Title verification, incomplete in any respect will be liable for rejection.
- (14) The broad criteria for Title verification adopted by Press Registrar in processing of applications is given below:
- a) Same or similar Title in a State in any language or same or similar Titles in the same language in whole of India will not be verified.
 - b) Titles which are same or similar to a foreign newspaper /magazine will not be verified unless a valid license agreement is produced with the foreign Title owner.
 - c) An applicant may apply for a new Title(s) only after she/he has registered the Title(s) earlier allotted to him.
 - d) Applicants will not submit more than three Title applications at a time. If more than three applications are received from one applicant, only three applications shall be considered while the rest will be summarily rejected.
 - e) Titles will be verified on first come first served basis, except in the following cases:
 - i) In case of a foreign Title where the applicant produces NOC from Ministry of Information Broadcasting.
 - ii) In case of a direction from the Court or any statutory authority, which is binding and it has been decided not to appeal against such direction/order.
 - iii) In any other case in public interest with the approval of the Press Registrar.
 - f) RNI will not be responsible for Titles rejected due to spelling errors committed by the applicant while filling the application.
 - g) RNI registers only newspapers and periodicals as defined under section 1 of the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867. Applications for Title verification from the following categories of applicants will not be entertained :
 - i) News agencies
 - ii) Feature agencies

- iii) News Websites
- iv) News Channels
- v) Electronic versions of publications, including Title options using words such as dot com, dot in, e-, blog, portal, Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, LinkedIn, Youtube, Yahoo, Google, Wikipedia, Wikileaks.

(15) The following categories of Titles will not be considered for proposed newspapers:

- i) Titles containing names of Government Departments, Government Organizations, Foreign Governments, International Organizations viz. UN, WHO, ILO, etc. which suggest misleading association with them.
- ii) Titles attributing association with public welfare schemes of Central/State Governments or its organizations or local bodies.
- iii) Titles using words like ad/ advertisement, classified, tender, real estate, calendar, panchang, matrimonial, yellow pages/page (generally prefixed with white, pink etc.), guide, diary, gist, fact sheet, bulletin, pamphlet, brochure, directory, as such publications **do not contain news/views/articles etc.**
- iv) Titles containing abbreviations or acronyms Eg: B2B, A2Z etc.
- v) Titles containing **any form of signs and symbols** including pictographs, videograms, hallmarks, logos, monograms, abbreviations, phonograms, emojis etc shall not be verified for use in the Title.
- vi) Titles containing non alpha-numeric characters viz. pictures or symbols.
- vii) Titles which are prima facie absurd and meaningless will not be verified. Any form of numerals and mathematical symbols like +, * etc should not be used in the Title. Titles which are meaningless combination of words such as Saptahik Weekly, Sandhya Evening, Daily Dainik News will not be verified.
- viii) Titles which have religious connotations, Titles which are obscene and offensive to public sentiments shall not be verified.
- ix) Titles having negative connotations or which could be misused with words like crime and corruption shall not be verified.

- x) Only Organizations/ Societies/Companies/Trusts may apply for Titles using words like Employment/Rozgar/Career/Job/Naukri. Such Titles will not be verified for individual applicants.
- xi) Titles in violation of “The Emblem and Name (Prevention of improper use) Act, 1950.
- xii) Titles which are same or similar to any **National Symbol, National Motto** or give an impression of misleading association with Central Government/ State Governments/ Local bodies will not be verified.
- xiii) Titles using the name of regulatory/ enforcement agencies in the country viz. ‘Police’, ‘Bureau’, ‘Investigation Department’, ‘Vigilance’, ‘CID’, ‘CBI’ etc. except to the Department concerned.
- xiv) Titles in the names of present / former President and Prime Minister of the country, present Governor and Chief Minister of the State in which the publication is being registered, present Chief Justice of India, Comptroller and Auditor General and Chief Election Commissioner.
- xv) Titles in the names of national leaders or resembling names of prominent national leaders, Heads of Government, functionaries of Central and State governments will not be verified. However, names of recognized national and state political parties will be considered if applied by the **concerned organization**.
- xvi) Titles which are a combination of existing registered newspapers, Titles combining two or more existing Titles or a part of any existing Title which does not make the new Title substantially different will not be verified. Inserting a word between two words of an existing Title will be considered similar, unless it makes a significant difference in the meaning.
- xvii) Titles containing the same words of an existing Title, whether in same or in different order irrespective of language, place of publication and periodicity.
- xviii) Titles formed by suffixing or prefixing the words relating to City, State, Periodicities, Language, prepositions/adjectives, articles (A, An, The) etc., to an **existing Title** will not be verified. Examples are: The, Times, Daily, Dainik, Weekly, V/Wartha, Aaj, Today, Express, News, Khabar, Samachar, Bulletin, Diary, India, National, Rashtriya etc.

- xix) Titles formed by prefixing or suffixing the periodicity or the language of the proposed publication to an **existing Title** will not be verified.
- xx) Titles of publications with contents solely aimed at competitive examinations or study material/coaching material will not be verified.
- xxi) Titles appearing similar to an existing Title on account of phonetic similarity, even if the spelling of the proposed Title is different will not be verified.

(16) **Miscellaneous instructions/provisions for guidance of applicants:**

- (a) The owner/publisher has to get the Title registered in the office of Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI), **within a period of one year from the date of Title verification**. In case the verified Title is not registered within one year, **it will be deblocked and will be available for other applicants.**
- (b) If during the processing of an application for Title verification, a **Discrepancy Letter (D/L)** has been issued, the applicant has to reply within 60 days of issue of such letter. The application will be rejected if no reply is received within the stipulated time. In such cases a fresh Title application authenticated by the District Magistrate concerned has to be submitted.
- (c) Discrepancy letters are available on RNI website. **Non-receipt of Discrepancy Letter will not be considered a reason for delay in submission of reply to the Discrepancy letter.**
- (d) An applicant will not have any claim over a deblocked Title previously owned by him/her. Verification of deblocked Title to any applicant will be governed by the current guidelines and rules.
- (e) Once an application is rejected, the applicant is required to submit fresh application through the forwarding authority. RNI will not entertain Title options directly from the applicant without proper authentication from the forwarding authority.
- (f) Press Registrar shall have the power to cancel a verified Title, if the same is not registered, after recording the reasons in writing.
- (g) The applicants are advised to strictly adhere to the guidelines while applying for Title verification to avoid any procedural delays and rejections.

- (h) In case of any doubt regarding the interpretation of same or similar, the decision of the Press Registrar shall be final.
 - (i) Titles for publication of Journals will not be verified in the name of an individual. Journals will be verified only in the name of Organization/Institutes/Societies etc. In such cases name of such Institution/Organization/Company should be prefixed before the Title in order to clearly differentiate between various journals on same/similar subject/s.
 - (j) The verified Title is subject to cancellation before registration if the content of the publication does not fall under category news and comment on public news or if the content of the publication does not match with the nature and content mentioned while applying for the Title.
 - (k) If a newspaper/publication is proposed to be brought out by a Government Department/Organization, the application for verification of such Title will be made by the respective Head of Department and the Title will be verified in his name only.
- (17). **Disclaimer** : Verification of Title for the proposed newspaper/periodical is only for the purpose of registration of the said newspaper with the Registrar of Newspapers under PRB Act, 1867. It does not mean approval of the Title as a Trade Mark/Brand Name, Company name etc. and the necessary approval for such purposes should be obtained by the applicants from relevant authorities under the provision of relevant Acts like Trade Mark Act, Companies Act, etc. **Any dispute in this regard will be a subject matter of dispute between the two parties concerned and Registrar of Newspapers for India will not be a party to it in any way.**
