

Cases of paid news

4256. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission has recently detected more than four hundred cases of paid news during the recently concluded Gujarat assembly elections;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action Commission proposes to take against the erring candidates involved therein; and

(c) the steps Government/EC proposes to take to curb such malpractices in the future elections?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The Election Commission of India has informed that District Level Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMCs) appointed by it have found 495 suspected cases of paid news in Gujarat and notices were issued to the candidates in those cases. After proper scrutiny of all the cases and reply/appeals received from candidates, 414 confined cases have been found. In the case of paid news, the candidates in whose favour such news reports were published were asked to account for such expense in their election expenditure account. On scrutiny of their election expenditure accounts, further action will be taken against such candidates under section 78 of Representation of People Act, 1951.

(c) In order to curb/restrict the publication of Paid News during elections, the Election Commission of India has formulated various guidelines which are being followed during elections to House of the People and State Legislative Assembly such as constituting State Level and District Level Media Certification and Monitoring Committees to oversee all kinds of elections related Paid News.

Fast Track Courts for accident cases

†4257. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Fast Track Courts are being set up for accident cases as well;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.