

**Villagers affected by riots in Muzaffarnagar**

†1614. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villagers affected by riots in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh living in relief camps and the details thereof;

(b) whether the people living in these relief camps belong to the same community;

(c) whether infants and children living in these relief camps have died due to cold and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of action taken against the administration responsible for the death of infants and children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH): (a) and (b) The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported to have initially set up 58 relief camps in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli Districts for the riot affected persons in which about 50955 persons were sheltered. As per the latest available information received from the State Government, 2516 persons are still living in 2 (two) regular relief camps and 4 (four) Satellite camps in Shamli District. No relief camp is reported to be operative in Muzaffarnagar District. The data regarding communities of persons living in camps is not maintained centrally.

(c) and (d) As per report from the State Government of Uttar Pradesh, the death of 33 children upto the age of 15 years was reported to a Committee set up by the State Government in response to directions of the hon'ble Supreme Court in a Writ Petition. However, there was no available documentary evidence for the number of deaths as well as reasons for the same. The action etc. against the administration rests with the State Government only.

**Probe into paid news**

1615. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the details of total number of paid news detected during assembly elections during last three years along with the average percentage that paid news accounts for in total election expenses;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government has conducted a probe into the extent of the phenomenon and if so, the names of the newspapers and persons found responsible;

(c) whether Government is aware that phenomenon of paid news has become pervasive, structured and highly organized which is undermining democracy in the country; and

(d) if so, whether Government proposes to take more stringent steps to check paid news and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI): (a) The number of cases of paid news received by the Election Commission of India during various elections to State Assemblies in the years 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 is given in Statement-I (*See* below). The information regarding average percentage that cases of paid news account for in total election expenses is not available.

(b) to (d) The Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body has been set up to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and also to inculcate the principles of self-regulation among the press. The PCI, in view of the wide ramifications of the issue of paid news has deliberated upon the issue and has released its 'Report on Paid News'. The major recommendations contained in the Report are given in Statement-II (*See* below).

The PCI takes cognizance, *suo moto* or on complaints of contents in print media which are in violation of the norms and which also include cases of paid news. The PCI adjudicates upon such cases under section 14 of the Press Council Act, 1978. The list of complaints of paid news adjudicated by PCI is given in Statement-III (*See* below) No case of paid news has been adjudicated by the PCI in the years 2012-13 and 2013-14.

As regards the electronic media, all TV channels are required to comply with the Programme & Advertisement Codes failing which action can be taken as per the terms and conditions of permission/registration. The Programme Code prohibits carriage of programmes containing anything deliberate, false, suggestive, innuendos and half-truths and if a violation is established, the Ministry may take action which may include taking the channel off-air either permanently or for a limited period.

The Election Commission also has taken cognizance of the PCI's Report on Paid news and has initiated measures to check incidents of election time paid news. The

Commission has issued instructions to Chief Electoral Officers of all the States to constitute District level and State level Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMC) for scrutiny of paid news. These Committees have been instructed to do vigorous scrutiny of electronic media, print media and other modes of mass communication in order to locate political advertisements in the garb of news coverage appearing during the election period. In addition, the Commission has also constituted a Committee at its own level to examine references from State level MCMCs and to support policy formulation for issues related to paid news and those related to usage of electronic and print media for campaigning by parties and candidates.

In addition, based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Information Technology, inclusion of provisions in the Press and Registration of Books and Publications Bill to check the incidents of paid news would also be pursued as per extant guidelines.

**Statement-I**

*Status of Paid News Cases during General Election, of Bihar-2010*

Sl. No.	Name of State /UT	No. of Paid News Cases
1	2	3
1.	Bihar	15

**A - Status of Paid News Cases during General Election in 2011**

Sl. No.	Name of State / UT	No. of cases, in which notices to the candidate issued	No. of confirmed cases of Paid News
1.	Kerala	65	65
2.	Puducherry	3	3
3.	Assam	42	27
4.	West Bengal	15	8
5.	Tamil Nadu	11	22

**B. Status of Paid News Cases during General Election in 2012**

1.	Uttar Pradesh	97	97
2.	Uttarakhand	60	30

1	2	3
3.	Punjab	339 523
4.	Goa	63 9
5.	Manipur	Nil Nil
6.	Gujarat	495 414
7.	Himachal Pradesh	190 104
<b>C. Status of Paid News Cases during General Election in 2013*</b>		
1.	Tripura	Nil Nil
2.	Meghalaya	Nil Nil
3.	Nagaland	Nil Nil
4.	Karnataka	93 93
5.	Mizoram	Nil Nil
6.	Chhattisgarh	35 32
7.	Rajasthan	110 81
8.	Madhya Pradesh	279 165
9.	NCT of Delhi	80 25

\* Some figures may change under future scrutiny.

#### ***Statement-II***

Major recommendations made by the Press Council of India, in its 'Report on Paid News' are as follows :

- Representation of the People Act, 1951, be amended to make incidence of paid news a punishable electoral malpractice.
- The Press Council of India must be fully empowered to adjudicate the complaints of 'Paid News' and give final judgment in the matter.
- Press Council Act be amended to make its recommendations binding and electronic media be brought under its purview, and
- Press Council of India should be reconstituted to include representatives from electronic and other media.

*Statement-III**Complaints adjudicated by the Press Council of India on Paid News during 2011-12*

Sl. No.	File No.	Complainant	Respondent	Subject	Action Taken/Status
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	14/78/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India	Hindustan	Publication of Paid News	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Absolved of the charges of Paid News.
2	14/79/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India	Dainik Jagran	Publication of Paid News	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Censure.
3	14/80/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India	Prabhat Khabar	Publication of Paid News	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Censure.

1	2	3	4	5	6
4	14/81/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India.	Rashtriya Sahara	Publication of Paid News	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Censure.
5	14/82/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India	Hindustan Times (English)	Publication of Paid News	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012'. Absolved of the charges of Paid News.
6	14/83/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India	Poorvanchal Ki Raah (Election Special)	Publication of Paid News	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Censure.
7	14/84/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India	Dainik Aaj	Publication of Paid News:	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Censure.

8	14/85/11-12	District Election Officer-cum-District Magistrate, Muzaffarpur (Bihar) through Election Commission of India	Dainik Udyog Vyapar Times	Publication of Paid News	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Censure.
9	14/123/11-12	Shri N. Konda, Indian National Congress Worker, S/o Shri N. Varadarajula Reddy, Proddatur, Dadapa, District (Andhra Pradesh).	Saakshi	Publication of a series of false news item about his father during election.	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Dismiss for default
10	14/706/11-12	Shri Susanta Swain, Dist. Ganjam, Odisha —767 050.	Sambad	Publication, of news item as paid news in favour of opposite party.	Adjudicated by the Council on 21.12.2012. Dismissed for default