

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 706  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26.07.2021**

**ROLE OF NEWS CHANNELS/ RADIO DURING COVID-19**

**706. SHRI B. LINGAIAH YADAV:**

**Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:**

- a) the details of role played by news channels/radio including Government/private in facing COVID-19 situation by general public and in displaying information about new helpline to needy persons including helpline for psychological support etc.; and
- b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND MINISTER OF  
YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS  
(SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR)**

- (a) and (b) Since March 2020, the Government has undertaken awareness generation on COVID-19, appropriate behaviour and vaccination. Several special programmes were broadcast on Doordarshan in various languages including MaskUp India Campaign: 24x7 campaign for promoting COVID-19 appropriate behavior, broadcast of bites of Vaccine recipients, and special programmes to clarify doubts and answer the public's questions, viz. Vaccination For All, Doctor's Chat, Corona Se Jung Jitenge Hum, and 'Aarogya Bharat' and 'Total Health' on weekends and over 100 episodes of Doctors Speak (March, 2020 to June, 2021).

Similarly, All India Radio also undertook extensive awareness generation activities in 92 dialects/ languages through its 46 RNUs including 607 news bulletins, stories, updates, advisory, guidelines, SOPs, national helpline numbers, mythbusters and briefings, 405 episodes of Live Public Phone in Program on COVID-19 have been aired since March, 2020 to June, 2021, Corona Jagrukta Series, with leading Medical Experts, broadcasting of 15,540 ground reports on GoI's measures and 6600 Public Service Messages /Announcements, Jingles.

The pre caller tune on Mobile phones was also deployed to encourage vaccination and observance of covid appropriate behaviour.

Private media including TV and FM radio supplemented the efforts by positioning Public Service Announcements, jingles, spots, special mentions by anchors, radio jockeys, experts and influencers. Advisories were sent to all Private Television Channels urging them to generate greater awareness on 'Dawai Bhi Kadai Bhi' by disseminating messages for COVID-19 appropriate behavior and vaccination. DTH operators across India were also requested to carry out messages regarding COVID-19 and vaccination.

The Government extensively created awareness for helpline numbers of COVID-19, for children, the elderly, and for psychological support, including through print advertisements and SMSs. Further, advisories were sent to private television channels, Private FM radio broadcasters and Community Radio Stations to promote awareness of the national helpline numbers.

Pre-caller tune, and digital platforms including of MyGov, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Press Information Bureau (PIB) and other Media Units of this Ministry, etc. were utilized for creating awareness of the helpline numbers.

\*\*\*\*\*