

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1356
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28/07/2022**

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PAID NEWS

1356. SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA:

Will the Minister of **INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken note of broadcast of fake news and sensationalization of news by various news channels in the country and if so, the reaction of Government thereto;
- (b) whether Government has any mechanism to monitor the content of news being broadcast by various news channels and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) details of complaints received about paid news in electronic and print media and those lodged by Press Council of India by taking self-cognizance thereof; and
- (d) whether it has not been possible to check this trend for lack of any special law on paid news and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) : All private TV channel are required to adhere to the Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, including that programmes should not contain anything obscene, defamatory, false and suggestive innuendos and half-truths. The Government has, vide notification dated 17.06.2021, amended the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 to provide for a statutory mechanism for redressal of grievances / complaints

regarding violation of Programme Code. Appropriate action is taken when violation of the Code is found. The Ministry also issues Advisories from time to time to private satellite TV channels for adhering to the Programme Code. A Fact Check Unit has also been set up under the Press Information Bureau in 2019 to counter fake news.

(c) & (d): Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body set up under the Press Council Act, 1978, has framed norms on “Paid News” and “Principle laid down to ascertain Paid News” under the Norms of Journalistic Conduct for adherence by the Print Media. Matters related to paid news are dealt by PCI in accordance with Press Council (Procedure for Inquiry) Regulation, 1979.

Election Commission of India (ECI) has a well-structured mechanism at the national, state and district levels to receive complaints relating to ‘Paid News’ and take necessary remedial action. The expenditure involved in these cases is included in the election expenditure of the candidates against which the paid news cases are confirmed.
