

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2137
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2022

DOCTORING OF NEWS/REPORTS BY MEDIA

2137. SMT. JEBI MATHER HISHAM:

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

- (a) whether Government has noticed the deliberate move of doctoring news/reports by some media with a malafide intention to tarnish the image of national leaders; and
- (b) if so, the steps taken by Government against such media?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (b): The Government has statutory and institutional mechanisms in place to address the issue of doctored news/reports including the following:

- (i) For Print Media, Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body set up under the Press Council Act, 1978, has framed “Norms of Journalistic Conduct” for adherence by the media. These norms inter alia emphasize the principles of accuracy and fairness & Pre-publication verification. PCI has formulated the specific norms to refrain Print Media from publication/ dissemination of fake/false news. The Council takes cognizance, suo-motu or on complaints, of the contents in print media which are in violation of the 'Norms of Journalistic**

Conduct'. As per section 14 of the Act, the Council, after holding an inquiry, may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist, as the case may be.

(ii) For Electronic Media, all television channels are required to adhere to the Programme Code under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 in respect of all content broadcast by them. The Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021, has been notified on 17.6.2021 which provides for a three tier grievance redressal mechanism to look into the complaints relating to the violation of the Programme Code by the TV channels.

(iii) For news on digital media, the Government has notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rule, 2021 under Information Technology Act which inter-alia provides for adherence of Code of Ethics by publishers of news on digital media and also three tier mechanisms for redressal of grievance relating to Code of Ethics by them.

Appropriate action is taken in cases where violation of the Norms, Codes, etc. is found. The Government also issues advisory from time to time to the media to adhere to the laid down Codes.

The Press Council of India also adjudicates cases related to Fake News and takes action thereupon.

A Fact Check Unit (FCU) has also been set up in Press Information Bureau under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in November, 2019 which addresses queries by citizens on its portal regarding authenticity of news in print, electronic and digital media and posts verified information on its social media platforms.

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