

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2639
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19/03/2018**

CENSORSHIP OF CONTENTS OF NEWS CHANNELS

2639. DR. V. MAITREYAN:

Will the Minister of **INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have any plan to regulate the contents of the News aired by the 24/7 News Channels and for censorship of paid news resulting in rumour mongering;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government have taken note on the increasing trends of paid news and the menace of news sensitization and breaking news culture;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the stringent action or plan of action to be adopted by Government to tackle the said issues?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
[COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)]**

(a) to (d): As per existing regulatory framework, all programmes and advertisements telecast on private satellite TV channels and transmitted/re-transmitted through the Cable TV network are required to adhere to the Programme Code and Advertising Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 framed thereunder. The Act does not provide for pre-censorship of any programme or advertisement telecast on such TV channels. However, it provides that all programmes and advertisements telecast on such TV channels should be in conformity with the prescribed Programme Code and Advertising Code enshrined in the said Act and the rules framed thereunder, which contain a wide range of parameters to regulate programmes and advertisements on TV channels.

The Press Council of India (PCI) has formulated guidelines for the media for observance during elections. PCI guidelines say – news should be clearly demarcated from advertisements by printing disclaimers, should be strictly enforced by all publications. As far as news is concerned, it must always carry a credit line and should be set in typeface that would distinguish it from advertisements. Besides, advertisement is meant to promote while news is meant to inform.

Instances of Paid News during Election time are directly dealt by Election Commission of India under the Representation of the People Act, 1951. It is stated that the Commission has constituted District level and State level Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMC). The MCMC examines all the newspapers, print media, electronic media, cable networks etc. and keeps records of the advertisements, advertorials, discussions and interviews relating to the candidates and parties. 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. After a case is established as confirmed case of Paid News, the same is forwarded to Press Council of India in case of print media. No specific instance of paid news in electronic media has been brought to the notice of this Ministry.

(e): The existing provisions contained in the Programme & Advertising Codes and the existing mechanism are considered adequate to regulate content telecast on private satellite TV channels.
