

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1852
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22/12/2022**

FAKE NEWS BROADCASTED ON INDIAN NEWS CHANNEL

1852. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB:

Will the Minister of **INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

be pleased to state:

- (a) whether certain news papers and broadcast media channels are unapologetically running fake news in the last five years;
- (b) if so, the number of incidents of fake news reported in the press and broadcasted on Indian News channels in the last five years, year-wise;
- (c) the actions taken by Government on the reported incidents;
- (d) whether Government is planning to make any particular committee/laws to curb such things; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons, therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): For Print Media, the Press Council of India (PCI) has framed the 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' which inter alia provide norms on Accuracy and Fairness. The PCI has an institutional mechanism for redressing any complaint received by it in accordance with the Press Council (Procedure for Inquiry) Regulations, 1979, and enables it to warn, admonish or censure a newspaper, news agency, editor or journalists, etc. From 01.04.2018 to till date in 19 cases newspapers were censured for publication of content related to fake news.

For electronic media, all TV channels are required to adhere to the Programme Code framed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 which inter alia provides that programme which contains anything obscene, defamatory, deliberate, false and suggestive innuendos and half-truths should not

be telecast. Further, under the Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021 dated 17th June, 2021, the Government has laid down a statutory Three Tier Grievance Redressal Mechanism to address grievances relating to violation of the Programme Code. In cases where violation of the Programme and Advertising Codes is established, action is taken by issuance of Advisories, Warnings, Apology scroll, Off-air orders etc. Since 2017, action has been taken in 233 cases for violation of Programme Code and Advertising Code.

For news on digital media, the Government has notified Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) on 25th February, 2021, which inter-alia provides for Code of Ethics to be followed by digital news publishers and a three level grievance redressal mechanism for addressing complaints relating to violation of the Code of Ethics by such publishers.

Under the provisions of IT Rules, 2021 the Ministry issues directions for blocking of content of digital news publishers covered under the provisions of Section 69 A of Information Technology Act, 2000. Since December, 2021, the Ministry has issued direction for blocking of 104 YouTube channels, 45 videos and 25 social media accounts/posts/Apps/websites of digital news publishers under these provisions.

A Fact Check Unit (FCU) has been setup in November, 2019 under Press Information Bureau of this Ministry. This unit takes cognizance of fake news both suo-motu and by way of queries sent by citizens on its portal or through e-mail and WhatsApp. The unit responds to the relevant queries with correct information when the same pertains to Central Government or forwards them to States/ UTs in other cases. The Unit also maintains a twitter account @PIBFactcheck and posts cases of fake news, being busted, on the same on regular basis. Total fake news busted till 15.12.2022 are 977.
