

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1841
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.03.2023**

INITIATIVES TAKEN TO CURB FAKE NEWS

1841. SHRI AYODHYA RAMI REDDY ALLA:

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

- (a) the details of initiatives taken to curb fake news in the country;
- (b) the details of platforms involved in the spread of fake news in the country;
- (c) whether any steps have been taken to regulate such platforms so as to prevent spread of fake news via them, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) whether Government proposes to launch a portal on which citizens can report fake news, 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) to (d) The Government has statutory and institutional mechanisms in place to combat fake news, including the following:

- i) A Fact Check Unit has been set up under Press Information Bureau under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in November, 2019 which takes cognizance of fake news relating to the Central Government both *suo-motu* and by way of queries sent by citizens on its portal or through e-mail and social media. The Unit responds to the relevant queries with correct and updated information. Details are available on <https://pib.gov.in>factcheck>.**

ii) 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 stress upon Accuracy and Fairness, Pre-publications Verification, distinction between Conjecture, speculation, comment and fact avoiding sensational / provocative headings and justification for the matter printed under them, etc.

In case of violation of Norms, as per section 14 of the Act, after holding an inquiry, PCI may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalists as the case may be.

iii) For Television, all TV Channels 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, deliberate, false and suggestive innuendos and half-truths;

iv) For digital news publishers, the Government has notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 under the IT Act, 2000 on 25th February, 2021, which inter alia provides for a Code of Ethics for adherence by digital news publishers.

Appropriate action is taken by the Government and the Press Council in case of violation of the Codes etc.
