

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1368**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.12.2024**

**MENACE OF FAKE NEWS**

1368. DR. ASHOK KUMAR MITTAL:

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

- (a) whether Government has taken note of fake news which are being spread at large scale through various media platforms disturbing the social fabric of the country;
- (b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;
- (c) whether Government is taking any steps to tackle the menace of fake news in the country;
- (d) whether any steps have been taken by Government to deal with fake news on social media including making the appointment of a Lokpal/ombudsman mandatory to investigate into the fake news; and
- (e) whether Government has any proposal to bring a legislation in this regard?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND  
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(DR. L. MURUGAN)

(a) to (e): The Government is committed to take all possible actions to control the spread of fake and misleading information which has potential to weaken our democracy and create fissures in the society. In this regard, the Government has statutory and institutional mechanisms in place to address fake news on various media platforms.

A Fact Check Unit (FCU) has been set up under Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in November, 2019 to counter fake news relating to the Central Government. After verifying the authenticity of news from authorised sources in Ministries/ Departments, FCU posts correct information on its social media platforms.

For Print Media, the newspapers have to adhere to “Norms of Journalistic Conduct” brought out by Press Council of India (PCI) which inter alia restrains publication of fake/ defamatory/ misleading news. The Council holds inquiry into alleged violations of Norms, as per section 14 of the Act, and may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, editors, journalists, etc. as the case may be.

Content on TV Channels is required to adhere to the Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, which inter alia provides that no content which contains anything obscene, defamatory, deliberate, false and suggestive innuendos and half-truths is broadcasted on private satellite TV channels. Cable Television Network (Amendment) Rules 2021, provides for a three-tier grievance redressal mechanism to look into the complaints relating to the violation of the Code by the TV channels. Appropriate action is taken where violation of Programme Code is found.

With regard to Digital news publishers, the Government has notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (“IT Rules, 2021”) on 25.02.2021 under the Information Technology Act, 2000. These Rules provide for a code of ethics for the publishers of news and current affairs on digital media, which, inter alia, requires adherence to the Norms of Journalistic Conduct brought out by PCI and the Programme Code under Cable Television Network Regulation Act, 1995.

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