

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2484
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.03.2025

PREVENTION OF SPREAD OF FAKE NEWS

2484. SMT. RAJANI ASHOKRAO PATIL:

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

- (a) the details of the number of cases of fake news and disinformation reported during the recent protests, State-wise;
- (b) the steps taken by Government to prevent the spread of fake news and disinformation and to promote fact-based reporting; and
- (c) the details of the measures taken by Government to regulate social media platforms and to ensure that they are not used to spread hate speech and disinformation?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
(DR. L. MURUGAN)

(a) to (c): The Government takes all possible actions to control the spread of fake and misleading information which has potential to adversely affect the society at large. In this regard, the Government has statutory and institutional mechanisms in place to address fake news on various media platforms.

For Print Media, the newspapers have to adhere to “Norms of Journalistic Conduct” brought out by the 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. for such violations as the case may be.

The content on private satellite 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 broadcast 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.

For the content of publishers of news and current affairs on digital media, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) provides for a Code of Ethics for such publishers.

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