

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 586
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2025

CONTROL OF FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION

586. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB:

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

- (a) the measures taken by the Government to control fake news and disinformation ;
- (b) whether Government has taken any action against television channels for disinformation or fake news; and;
- (c) if so, the details of such cases reported and action taken by Government?

ANSWER

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

(a) The Government takes appropriate action to control the spread of fake news and disinformation 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 viz. print media, electronic media & digital media.

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.

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. The 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) prescribes a Code of Ethics which, inter-alia, includes the Norms of Journalistic Conduct of PCI and Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.

A Fact Check Unit (FCU) has been set up under Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in November, 2019 to address the complaints relating to 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.

(b) to (c) During the last four years from 2022 to 25, the Government has taken action in respect of 94 cases of violation of Programme Code and Advertising Code by way of issuance of Advisories, Warnings, Apology Scroll Orders, Off-Air Orders etc to private satellite TV channels.

The Ministry also issues Advisories from time to time to private satellite TV channels for adherence of the Programme Code and Advertisement Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.
