

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2113
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2022**

SCHEME TO CONTROL FAKE NEWS

**2113. SHRI ADALA PRABHAKARA REDDY:
SHRI KURUVA GORANTLA MADHAV:**

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

- (a) the details of schemes to control rising fake news in the nation and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) the details and the number of individuals booked under law for spreading fake news during the last year; and
- (c) the details and the number of individuals within the Government booked for spreading fake news during the last five years?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) The Government has statutory and institutional mechanisms in place to control fake news including the following:

- (i) 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 emphasize the principles of accuracy and fairness & Pre-publication verification. The**

Council takes cognizance, suo-motu or on complaints, of the contents in print media which are in violation of the 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct'. As per section 14 of the Act, the Council, after holding an inquiry, may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist, as the case may be.

During the year 2021, PCI has censured 5 newspapers for publishing content relating to fake news.

- (ii) For Electronic Media, all television channels are required to adhere to the Programme Code under the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 which inter alia provides that no content which contains anything obscene, defamatory, false and suggestive innuendos and half-truths is broadcast. The Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021, has been notified on 17.6.2021 which provides for a three tier grievance redressal mechanism to look into the complaints relating to the violation of the Programme Code by the TV channels. Appropriate action is taken where violation of Programme Code is found.**

Advisories to all private satellite TV channels has been issued by the Central Government on 25.02.2020 and 23.04.2022 for adherence to the Programme Code.

- (iii) For news on digital media, the Government has notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rule, 2021 under Information Technology**

Act, 2000 which inter-alia provides for adherence of Code of Ethics by publishers of news on digital media and also a three tier mechanism for redressal of grievance relating to Code of Ethics by them.

As per the provision of Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rule, 2021, Ministry issues directions for blocking of content of digital news publishers covered under the provisions of Section 69 A of Information Technology Act, 2000. From December 2021, Ministry has issued direction for blocking of 104 YouTube news channels, 45 videos and 25 social media accounts/ posts/ Apps/ Websites of digital news publishers under these provisions.

A Fact Check Unit setup under Press Information Bureau of this Ministry in November, 2019 takes cognizance of fake news/ misinformation both *suo-motu* and by way of queries sent by citizens on its portal or through e-mail, whatsapp, and responds to the relevant queries with correct information. It also maintains a twitter account @PIBFactcheck and posts cases of fake news, being busted, on the same on regular basis. PIB Fact Check Unit has a Website Portal - <https://factcheck.pib.gov.in/> for reporting of fake news and for fact-checking of information by the citizens.
