

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

LOK SABHA

**STARRED QUESTION NO. *71
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2023**

INCREASE IN CASES OF FAKE NEWS

***71. SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN:**

SHRI BENNY BEHANAN:

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

- a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the increase in fake news cases as reflected in data published by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) and if so, the details thereof;
- b) whether the Government intends to undertake any study on the spread of misinformation on social media during political protests and elections in the country, if so, the details thereof;
- c) whether the Government has taken any initiatives to prevent the spread of fake news on social media platforms;
- d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- e) the details and the number of complaints received and action taken by the Government under the Press Information Bureau (PIB) fact check initiative since inception, year-wise?

ANSWER

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

A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.71 TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2023 ON INCREASE IN CASES OF FAKE NEWS

(a) to (e) : Government is aware of fake news on various media platforms, including cases reported by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). 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. Since its inception, the PIB has countered over 37,000 complaints. It has busted 1,160 cases of fake news, year-wise details of which are as under:**

Year	Number of Fake News Busted on @PIBFactCheck social media handles
2019	17
2020	394
2021	285
2022	338
2023	126
Total	1160

- ii) For Print Media, Press Council of India has framed 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' under the Press Council Act, 1978 which inter alia emphasize the principles of accuracy and fairness;**

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.
