

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3304
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.03.2023**

FAKE NEWS

3304. SHRI P.C.MOHAN:

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

- (a) the details of the steps taken by the Government to stop the menace of fake news in the country;
- (b) whether any steps have been taken by the Government to stop fake news on social media including mandating appointment of ombudsman by Social media Companies to check fake news; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

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 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 to counter the menace of fake news.**

Fact Check Unit 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. Details are available on <https://pib.gov.in>factcheck>.

(ii) 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. In case of violation of Norms, as per section 14 of the Act, after holding an inquiry, PCI may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalists as the case may be.

(iii) 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.

(iv) 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.
