

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 919
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.02.2021**

FAKE NEWS IN BACKDROP OF COVID-19

919. SHRI THOMAS CHAZHIKADAN :

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

- (a) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that fake news caused misinformation and damage to the individuals as well as the country in the backdrop of COVID-19; and
- (b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard to tackle such situations in future ?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE;
MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND MINISTER
OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)**

(a) to (b) : Instances of fake news in media have come to the notice of the Government from time to time.

In the backdrop of COVID-19, a dedicated COVID Fact Check Unit was set up in Press Information Bureau (PIB) of this Ministry on 1st April, 2020 to provide correct and updated information related to COVID-19 in a time bound manner.

The Press Council of India (PCI) has framed “Norms of Journalistic Conduct” for adherence by the media of publishing news which is accurate and fair. PCI issued an advisory dated 01.04.2020 for media to responsibly ensure dissemination of verified news on COVID-19 outbreak in terms of the Hon’ble Supreme Court’s Order dated 31.03.2020 in W.P. (C) No. 468/2020.

With regard to electronic media, the Cable Television Networks (Regulations) Act, 1995 and the Rules made there under inter alia provide that no programme shall be carried out which contains anything obscene, defamatory, deliberate, false and suggesting innuendoes and half truths.

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