

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1765

(TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2025)

MISINFORMATION SPREAD BY MEDIA

1765. DR. MOHAMMAD JAWED:

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

(a) whether the Government is aware that certain sections of the media are often involved in disseminating misinformation and half-baked or false narratives;

(b) if so, the details of measures being taken by the Government to curb the spread of such misinformation given its potential to create social unrest;

(c) the manner in which the Government proposes to address the growing challenge of AI-generated videos on social media platforms that propagate misleading content and may threaten social harmony; and

(d) whether the Government is considering bringing forth legislation to make the deliberate and excessive dissemination of false information a punishable offence?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(DR. L. MURUGAN)

(a) to (d): Government has a sovereign duty to tackle fake news and misinformation.

Legal Provisions to counter misinformation include:

- **Print Media:** Newspapers have to adhere to “Norms of Journalistic Conduct” brought out by the Press Council of India (PCI). These norms inter-alia restrain publication of fake/defamatory/ misleading news. The Council holds inquiry into alleged violations of the norms, as per section 14 of the Act, and may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, editors, journalists, etc. as the case may be.
- **Television media:** TV channels are required to adhere to the Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, which, inter alia, provides that content which contains anything obscene, defamatory, deliberate, false and suggestive innuendos and half-truths is not broadcast. 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.
- **Digital media:** For the publishers of news and current affairs on digital media, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) provide for a Code of Ethics.

A Fact Check Unit (FCU) has been set up under Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in November, 2019 to check fake news relating to the Central Government. After verifying the authenticity of news from authorized sources in Ministries/ Departments of Government of India, FCU posts correct information on its social media platforms.

Under the Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, Government issues necessary orders to block websites, social media handles and posts in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, and public order.

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