

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:386
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2010
PAID NEWS
Das Gupta Shri Gurudas

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

- (a) whether the recent phenomenon of paid news has assumed alarming proportion particularly as a serious electoral malpractice;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken to check this phenomenon?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. JATUA)

(a) & (b): There have been a number of media reports that sections of electronic and print media have received monetary considerations for publishing or broadcasting in favour of particular individuals or organizations, what is essentially advertisement disguised as news. This is commonly referred to as 'paid news'. This phenomenon of paid news could cause a double jeopardy to the democracy through influence on the press functioning as also on the free and fair election process.

(c) The Press Council of India (PCI), an autonomous body set up under Press Council Act, 1978 for preserving the freedom of press and maintaining and improving the standard of newspapers and news agencies in India, has constituted a Sub-Committee to examine the 'Paid News Syndrome'. The Sub-Committee has submitted its report for consideration of the full Council. In a special meeting of the Council held on 26.04.2010, the report of the Sub-committee was considered and the Council decided to constitute a Drafting Committee to draft a report drawing upon the information and findings of the Sub-Committee. The Drafting Committee has been given a time frame of three months to finalize the Report and the Committee is expected to submit its report by the end of July, 2010.

The Government will take appropriate action on receiving the recommendations of the Press Council of India.