

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:84

ANSWERED ON:22.11.2011

PAID NEWS

Gangaram Shri Awale Jaywant;Reddy Shri K. Jayasurya Prakash

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

- (a) the number of cases of paid news reported during the recent past alongwith the action taken on each case;
- (b) the details of progress made by the Government/Press Council of India (PCI) to check the menace of paid news;
- (c) the major recommendations made by the PCI in its reports on paid news;
- (d) whether a Group of Ministers (GoMs) constituted by the Government to examine the recommendations made in the report on paid news, has submitted its report to the Government;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon; and
- (f) if not, the time by which the GoM is likely to submit its report to the Government?

Answer

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

- (a): The cases of paid news reported to the Press Council of India during the recent past alongwith action taken thereon are annexed.
- (b) & (c): The PCI has taken cognizance of the serious issue of Paid news and has released a Report on Paid News. The major recommendations made by PCI in its Report are as follows,
 - # Representation of the People Act, 1951, be amended to make incidence of paid news a punishable electoral malpractice.
 - # The Press Council of India must be fully empowered to adjudicate the complaints of `paid news` and give final judgment in the matter.
 - # Press Council Act be amended to make its recommendations binding and electronic media be brought under its purview, and
 - # Press Council of India should be reconstituted to include representatives from electronic and other media.
- The Government has constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) to examine the PCI's Report on Paid News and give its views on a comprehensive policy and institutional mechanism to address this phenomenon. The Election Commission has also taken various measures to check the incidents of paid news during election time.
- (d) to (f): The GoM on Paid News has deliberated upon the issue in its first meeting held on 07th September 2011. The GoM has not yet submitted its report and no time limit has been specified for the GoM for submission of its report to the Government.