

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW AND JUSTICE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4059

ANSWERED ON:21.03.2013

PAID NEWS

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Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of substantial increase in the cases of paid news during the elections in the country;
- (b) if so, the number of complaints received by the Election Commission regarding paid news during the recent assembly elections, State/UT-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DR. ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a) and (b) During recent elections, the Election Commission has identified several cases of paid news through its District and State Level Media Certification and Monitoring Committees, which are as follows:-

(i) 211 cases of paid news were reported to District/State level Media certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMCs) during general election to Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly, 2012, out of which, 104 cases were found as cases of paid news by respective MCMCs.

(ii) 563 cases of paid news were reported to District/State level MCMCs during general elections to Gujarat Legislative Assembly, 2012, out of which, 414 cases were found as cases of paid news by respective MCMCs.

(iii) No complaints on paid news were received by District/State level MCMCs in respect of recently held elections of Meghalaya and Nagaland.

(iv) 5 complaints on paid news were reported to District/State level MCMCs in respect of recently held general election to Tripura Legislative Assembly, out of which no case was decided as paid news by MCMC.

(c) The Election Commission has intimated that in the cases of paid news, the candidates in whose favour such news reports were published were asked to account for such expense in their election expenditure account whereas in case where print media is involved, these were forwarded to Press Council of India for necessary action. A proposal to make paid news a corrupt practice is being considered by a Group of Ministers.