

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:636
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2013
PAID NEWS IN ELECTIONS
Lagadapati Shri Rajagopal

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

- (a) the aims and objectives of ``name and shame`` policy being adopted by the Election Commission (EC) in relation to paid news during elections;
- (b) the details of cases of paid news reported during elections in each of the last three years, and the current year, year-wise and State-wise along with the action taken on each of the above cases;
- (c) whether instances of political parties indulging in paid news are rampant despite EC`s vigil;
- (d) if so, the manner in which the Election Commission and the Government are planning to curb the same; and
- (e) the current status of the proposal to make paid news a corrupt practice?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

- (a) The Election Commission of India has intimated that they have no policy by the name of 'name and shame' policy.
- (b) The details of cases of paid news reported during each of last three years, and the current year as furnished by the Election Commission is attached as 'Annexure.'
- (c) The Election Commission of India has intimated that there are instances of political parties indulging in paid news reported in most of the elections till date.
- (d) Before announcement of each general election, meeting is taken by the Election Commission of India with political parties and media houses separately to sensitize them in respect of paid news and its measures in this connection. During election process, the Election Commission of India constitutes District and State level Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMCs) to examine the cases of paid news and on the basis of the report of MCMC, the notices are issued to candidates concerned to include expenditure on such items in their account of election expenses. Any further action against the candidates, who do not include such expenditure in their accounts of election expenses is taken only after scrutiny of their election expenditure accounts, submitted by them under section 78 of the Representation of the People Act 1951. Thereafter, all the established cases of paid news are also forwarded to Press Council of India (PCI)(for print media) and News Broadcasters Association (for electronic media) for taking necessary action in respect of concerned Media houses.
- (e) The Government is committed to bring forward a purposive agenda for electoral reforms which , inter alia, include curbing the role of paid news in election. With this end in view, the issue of electoral reforms in its entirety has been referred to the Law Commission of India with a request to consider the issue after taking into consideration the reports of various committees in the past, views of the Election Commission and other stake holders and suggest comprehensive measures for changes in the law. The Law Commission has been requested to give concrete suggestions at the earliest. On receipt of the recommendations of the Law Commission, matter will be further examined in consultation with the stake holders.

ANNEXURE TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 636 FOR ANSWERING ON THE 7TH AUGUST, 2013
ANNEXURE

Status of Paid News Cases during General Election of Bihar-2010

SI No. Name of State/UT No. of Paid News Cases

1. Bihar 15

Status of Paid News Cases during General Election in 2011

SI No. Name of State/UT No. of cases, in which notices to the candidate issued No. of confirmed cases of Paid News

1. Kerala 65 65

2. Puducherry 3 3

3. Assam 42 27

4. West Bengal 15 8

5. Tamil Nadu 11 22

Status of Paid News Cases during General Election in 2012

SI No. Name of State/UT No. of cases, in which notices to the candidate issued No. of confirmed cases of Paid News

1. Uttar Pradesh 97 97

2. Uttarakhand 60 30

3. Punjab 339 523

4. Goa 63 9

5. Manipur Nil Nil

6. Gujarat 495 414

7. Himachal Pradesh 190 104

Status of Paid News Cases during General Election in 2013

SI No. Name of State/UT No. of cases, in No. of confirmed
which notices to cases of Paid
the candidate issued News

1. Tripura No No

2. Meghalaya No No

3. Nagaland No No

Status of Paid News Cases during General Election to Karnataka Assembly elections 2013

SI No. Name of State/UT No. of cases, in No. of confirmed
which notices to cases of Paid
the candidate issued News

1. Karnataka 93 93

Certain cases are still in process. Some are getting modified.