

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:83
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2013
PAID NEWS
Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan)

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

- (a) whether financial and other unethical benefits are being cornered through paid news in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to ban this practice; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI)

(a) to (b) The Press Council of India (PCI), in view of the wide ramifications of the issue of paid news has deliberated upon the issue and has released a Report on Paid News. The Report indicates that the forms of paid news range from accepting gifts on various occasions, foreign and domestic junkets, and various monetary and non-monetary benefits, besides direct payment of money. Another form of paid news that has been brought to the notice of the Press Council of India by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is in the form of 'Private Treaties' between media companies and corporate entities. The Report on Paid News released by PCI is available on the Press Council's website presscouncil.nic.in.

(c) to (d) In furtherance of its objectives, the PCI has formed 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' for adherence by the media. The Norm 36 (vi) prescribes that advertisements must be clearly distinguishable from editorial matter carried in the newspapers. The Press Council takes cognizance, suo motu or on complaints, of contents in print media which prima facie, are violative of Norms of Journalistic Conduct. The Press Council may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist.

As regards the electronic media, all TV channels are required to comply with the Programme & Advertisement Codes failing which action can be taken as per the terms and conditions of permission/registration. The Programme Code prohibits carriage of programmes containing anything deliberate, false suggestive, innuendos and half-truths and if a violation is established, the Ministry may take action which may include taking the channel off-air either permanently or for a limited period. The Government has set up a state-of-art Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) to monitor and record channels on a 24x7 basis.