

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5648
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26.07.2019

PAID NEWS

**5648. SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR:
SHRI RAJA AMARESHWARA NAIK:
DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR:**

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

- (a) whether the Government has received complaints about paid news in electronic and print media, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of various complaints received about paid news in electronic and print media and those lodged by the Press Council of India by taking self-cognizance thereof;
- (c) whether it has not been possible to check this trend for lack of any special law on paid news, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to frame any law or policy to check paid news and amend the Press Council Act; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE;
& MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
[SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR]**

(a) & (b) Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body set up under the Press Council Act, 1978, has received 58 cases of Paid News during 2018-19 from Election Commission of India & others. These cases are dealt in accordance with Press Council (Procedure for Inquiry) Regulation, 1979.

No specific instance of paid news in electronic media (Private Satellite TV Channels) has been brought to the notice of this Ministry.

(c) to (e) Apart from PCI, Election Commission of India also has a well structured mechanism to receive complaints relating to Paid News.

The Press Council of India has recommended amendment to the Representation of the People Act, 1951 in order to make incidence of paid news a punishable electoral malpractice. The Election Commission of India has also recommended for including "Paid News" in the category of corrupt practices or electoral offences.
