

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2783
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.08.2025**

EFFICACY OF VARIOUS MEDIA UNITS

2783. Shri Bajrang Manohar Sonwane:

Smt. Bharti Pardhi:

Shri Shrirang Appa Chandu Barne:

Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

- a) the efficacy of various media units of the Ministry (such as the Central Bureau of Communication and Prasar Bharati) in disseminating information about various Government schemes and programmes to the common man particularly in remote and rural areas especially from Maharashtra;
- b) the key performance indicators used to measure this efficacy alongwith the outcomes thereof;
- c) the specific measures being taken to ensure that Government information is accessible to all sections of society including persons with disabilities, linguistic minorities and persons with limited digital literacy, through multiple formats and regional languages;
- d) the concrete steps being taken to identify, counter and prevent the spread of fake information and misleading information, particularly through digital platforms which can significantly impact public opinion and social harmony; and
- e) the manner in which such measures are balanced with the freedom of expression?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. L. MURUGAN)

(a) to (e): Government disseminates information about its policies, schemes and programmes through various media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Press Information Bureau:

- Timely and accurate dissemination of information through press releases, press briefings, backgrounder, explainers and rejoinders.
- Media workshops and interactions enable direct engagement of government with local media, especially in rural and remote areas.

Central Bureau of Communication (CBC):

Dissemination of information about government schemes, initiatives and policies through:

- Advertisements on various media platforms namely, Newspapers, Periodicals, TV, Radio, Outdoor, Digital cinema, SMS, Internet Websites, Social Media.
- Multimedia Digital Exhibitions, Folk Performances, Photo Exhibitions, and Special/Integrated Communication & Outreach Programmes (SOPs/ICOPs).
- Door-to-door campaigns, mobile vans with audio announcements, and public awareness webinars to engage communities directly

New India Samachar reaches Gram Panchayats and 6.5 crore readers in 13 languages, ensuring wide dissemination of government schemes through print and digital formats.

Akashvani and Doordarshan:

- Akashvani ensures nationwide radio coverage in multiple regional languages, including coverage across Maharashtra.
- DD Free Dish offers 142 TV channels (92 private + 50 Doordarshan), broadcasting in various regional languages for wider outreach.
- DD News delivers content in 26 languages, including Marathi, with DD Kendra Mumbai airing regular regional bulletins in Marathi.

- Regional News Units of DD promote participatory communication by enabling public feedback on government schemes.

Government disseminates authentic information through these mediums to all sections of society. Special efforts are made to ensure accessibility of information for persons with disabilities:

- DD News broadcasts two special news bulletins daily with sign language interpretation for hearing impaired (HI) persons.
- Channel runs story bands, 24x7 scrolls, and graphic content to aid easier on-screen access.
- Sign language versions of nationally important events are regularly telecast.

Freedom of expression is protected under Article 19 of the Constitution. Statutory and institutional mechanisms to curb the fake and misleading information news on various media platforms include:

Press Council of India Act, 1978 for the print media:

- “Norms of Journalistic Conduct” by Press Council of India (PCI) prohibits publication of fake/ defamatory/misleading news by newspapers.
- Section 14 provides for inquiry to be conducted into alleged violations of the norms.
- PCI can warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, editors, journalists, etc.

Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 for the Electronic media:

- Mandatory for TV channels to follow Programme and Advertising Codes framed under the act.
- Broadcast of obscene, defamatory, deliberate, false and suggestive innuendos and half-truth content is not allowed.
- Three-level grievance redressal structure for enforcement of Programme and Advertising Codes and handle complaints:

Level I – Self-regulation by the broadcasters themselves

Level II – Self-regulation by broadcasters’ self-regulatory bodies

Level III – Oversight mechanism by the Central Government

Information Technology Act 2000:

Section 69A empowers the Government to block public access to online content as per provisions of the act.

Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021):

- Part-III of the rules provides for digital platforms to follow a Code of Ethics.
- Mandatory to remove unlawful or misleading content upon receiving legal orders.
- Three-tier mechanism is established to address grievances/complaints as follow:

Level I: Self-regulation by the publishers

Level II: Self-regulation by the self-regulating bodies of the publishers

Level III - Oversight mechanism by the Central Government

Complaints received by the Ministry are forwarded to the concerned OTT platforms for resolution as per IT Rules, 2021.

Fact Check Unit (FCU):

- A Fact Check Unit has been set up under the Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to check fake news relating to the Central Government.
- It verifies the authenticity of news from authorized sources in Ministries/ Departments of Government of India.
- FCU posts correct information on its social media platforms.

This framework safeguards creative freedom while addressing the harms caused by misinformation.

During Op Sindoora, the Unit actively monitored social media platforms and online news sources in real time to detect fake images, edited videos, misleading narratives, and any manipulated content targeting the operation's objectives, government agencies, or security forces.

The Unit debunked Pakistani propaganda against India and Indian Armed Forces and fact-checked many posts countering such content. Additionally, the links related to disinformation

or false news concerning Operation Sindoor, fact-checked by the FCU, were promptly shared with concerned intermediaries for appropriate action.

The efforts of the Fact Check Unit were appreciated by media. The links of some of the articles are given below:

- **India's FCU battles Pakistan's digital propaganda with swift rebuttals following 'Operation Sindoor'**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2025/May/10/indias-fcu-battles-pakistans-digital-propaganda-with-swift-rebuttals-following-operation-sindoor>

- **Govt fact-checking unit swings into action in the wake of Operation Sindoor to highlight false claims**

<https://www.livemint.com/industry/media/india-pib-govt-fact-checking-unit-operation-sindoor-misinformation-false-claims-11746770729519.html>

- **How India is fighting Pakistan's disinformation campaign**

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/how-india-is-fighting-pakistan-s-disinformation-campaign-101746644575505.html>

Under the Section 69A of the Information Technology Act 2000, Government issued necessary orders to block websites, social media handles and posts in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, and public order.

Ministry also issued directions for **blocking of over 1,400 URLs on digital media** during Operation Sindoor. The content of these URLs included false, misleading, anti-India news content, communally sensitive content primarily from Pakistan-based social media accounts and inciteful content against Indian Armed Forces.
