

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:347  
ANSWERED ON:20.04.2010  
PAID /SPONSORED NEWS  
Patil Shri A.T. Nana;Patil Shri C. R.

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

- (a) whether incidents of paid and sponsored news have been reported recently;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon;
- (c) the mechanism available to investigate such complaints;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to examine the matter; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.347 TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.04.2010 REGARDING PAID/SPONSORED NEWS

(a) to (e): There have been a number of media reports that sections of the electronic and print media have received monetary considerations for publishing or broadcasting in favour of particular individuals or organizations or corporate entities, what is essentially "advertisement" disguised as "news". This has been commonly referred to as the "paid news syndrome".

The Government, in pursuance of the objective of preserving the freedom of press and maintaining and improving the standard of newspapers in India and to inculcate the principles of self regulation among the press, has set up Press Council of India (PCI), an autonomous body under the Press Council Act, 1978. The PCI has constituted a Sub-Committee to consider the issue of Paid/Sponsored news and to collect evidence from stakeholders, including the Election Commission of India. The Committee also met representatives of Indian Newspapers Society (INS) and Indian Language Newspapers Association (ILNA). The Committee also held its meeting at Mumbai and Hyderabad to interact with the stake holders.

The Sub- Committee has submitted its report to the Council and the Report is likely to be placed before the Special Council meeting to be held on 26.04.2010. The Government will take a view on receiving the recommendations of the Press Council of India in this regard.