

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

RAJYA SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 884
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27-07-2023**

FACT-CHECKING BY PIB

884. SHRI S NIRANJAN REDDY:

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

- a) the number of fact-checks conducted by Government since its inception, year-wise;
- b) whether Government takes further steps to take down content fact-checked as misleading or false by Press Information Bureau (PIB);
- c) whether any orders have been issued to block accounts and other online, especially, social media content based on the fact-checks conducted by the fact-checking unit by PIB;
- d) if so, the details thereof; and
- e) whether Government plans to direct online fact-checking platforms to obtain registration from Government to seek greater accountability from them?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND
MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
(SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR)**

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(a) to (d) A Fact Check Unit (FCU) has been set up in Press Information Bureau under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in November, 2019 which takes cognizance of fake news relating to the Central Government both suo-motu and by way of queries sent by citizens on its portal or through e-mail and social media and responds to the relevant queries with correct and updated information related to the policies, schemes, guidelines, initiatives, etc of the Government of India. The Unit also maintains a twitter

account @PIBFactcheck and posts cases of fake news, being busted, on the same on regular basis. Year-wise details of fact-checks done by FCU, since its inception is as below:

2019 (from November, 2019)	19
2020	394
2021	285
2022	338
2023 (upto 17th July, 2023)	240
Total	1276

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has, since December, 2021, issued directions for blocking from public access of 635 URLs, including 120 YouTube based news channels under the provisions of Part-III of Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rule, 2021 in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to the above, including fake news, in accordance with the provisions of Section 69 A of Information Technology Act, 2000

(e) The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 does not require registration of any publisher of news and current affairs on digital media, including those news publishers undertaking fact checking; only information under rule 18 needs to be furnished.
