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Press Release

Press Council of India Advises the Print Media to follow the Norms of Journalistic Conduct-2022 on Paid News for observance during the upcoming Legislative Assembly Elections in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram

In wake of the upcoming General Legislative Assembly Elections in the state of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram in the month of November, 2023, the Press Council of India advises the Print Media to follow the Norms of Journalistic Conduct-2022 on Paid News as under:

Paid News can be defined as "Any news or analysis appearing in any media (Print & Electronic) for a price in cash or kind as consideration"

2. The Press Council of India has, therefore, formulated the following guidelines for adherence by the print media to refrain from paid news publications during elections:

- (a) The newspaper should not misconstrue or misquote the statements given by leader. The statements quoted in editorial should project the true spirit of what is being tried to be conveyed by them.
- (b) Columns of news items which largely indicate names of voters on Caste basis and supporters of the candidate of particular political party, such tenor and manner of presentation of news establish the report to be paid news.
- (c) Political news published in competing newspaper with similar content strongly suggests such reports to be paid news.
- (d) Two newspapers publishing same news item verbatim during election days is not accidental and it is evident that such news items have been published for consideration.
- (e) Manner of presentation of a news item/photograph that too in favor of a particular party/candidate as also the appeal for voting in favor of a particular party is suggestive of paid news.
- (f) Projecting a candidate's success in Election who is yet to file a nomination is suggestive of paid news.
- (g) News Reports on Campaign meeting and states enthusiasm because film stars were present cannot be termed as paid news.



(h) While covering news on election, the newspapers are advised to ensure balance in publishing report/interview of candidates.

(i) During the course of election, subject to conditions laid down by the Election Commission of India, newspapers are free to make an honest assessment of prospects of candidates or the parties and its publication would not be paid news so long it is not established that consideration passed on for such publication.

(j) Newspapers shall not publish any news survey predicting the victory of any political party without verification of it.

(k) An attempt to influence the voters by projecting the contesting candidate with all virtues during the election is paid news.

(l) A news item giving negative aspect of a candidate and at the same time the positive aspect of candidate of other political party without any basis clearly shows that it is paid news.

3. The Print Media is advised to take note of the above Norms of the Press Council on Paid news to follow for observance during the elections in the respective states.

