GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2843
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 15.12.2021

INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

2843. SHRI RAJBAHADUR SINGH:
SHRI RODMAL NAGAR:
SHRI P.P. CHAUDHARY:
SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH SOLANKY:
DR. KRISHNA PAL SINGH YADAV:
SHRI SANGAM LAL GUPTA:
SHRI PRATAP CHANDRA SARANGI:
SHRI MANOJ TIWARI:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of aims, objectives and significance of India having its own Internet Governance Forum;

(b) whether the Government is planning to regulate the access of internet for children as an agreement on most websites stands null and void for minors and if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the Government is taking steps to provide a platform level to the Indian home-grown apps and if so, the details of appropriate policy support given therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a): The aim & objectives of India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF) is to bring the large diverse communities of India together on a platform, to project the community voice and opinion in matter of Internet Governance, creating synergies and enhance understanding of Internet Public Policy and its impact in the Indian scenario, increasing the multi-stakeholderism within the Internet Governance ecosystem. IIGF is conducted under the aegis of United Nations Internet Governance Forum.

The significance of having India Internet Governance Forum is that it gives an opportunity to engage Indian citizens, stakeholders and policy makers in a dialogue on various issues and concerns which are linked with healthy growth of the Internet, while keeping it open, safe & trusted and accountable.

(b): There is no such proposal under consideration to regulate the access of internet for children. However, Government has taken the following steps to make cyber space safe and trustworthy for children, which inter alia include:

    (i)   Section 67B of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 provides stringent punishment for publishing, transmitting or viewing Child sexual abuse material online.

    (ii) The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 empower the users of Intermediaries and makes the social media platforms accountable for their safety. The Rules require the intermediaries to adopt a robust grievance redressal mechanism including time-bound disposal of grievances. The Intermediaries need to convey their terms and conditions which must include communication to users not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is inter alia harmful, defamatory, obscene, invasive of another's privacy, harm minors in any way or are otherwise unlawful. Intermediaries are also expected to remove any information violative of any law in India as and when brought to their knowledge either through a court order or through a notice by an appropriate government or its authorised agency. The Rules also require Significant Social media Intermediary (SSMI) to endeavour to deploy technology based measures to proactively identify child sexual abuse material.

    (iii) Government periodically blocks the websites containing child sexual abuse material (CSAM) based on INTERPOL's "worst of list" received through Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the national nodal agency for Interpol in India.

    (iv) Government has issued an order to concerned Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to implement Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), UK or Project Arachnid, Canada list of CSAM websites/webpages on a dynamic basis and block access to such child pornography webpages/websites.

    (v) MeitY through a programme, namely, Information Security Education & Awareness (ISEA), has been creating awareness among users including women and children highlighting the importance of digital safety while using Internet. A dedicated website for information security awareness (https://www.infosecawareness.in) provides relevant awareness material.

(c): Government has initiated an indigenous app store named as Mobile Seva Appstore under AatmaNirbhar Bharat mission as a platform to host Indian apps. It enables all Government Departments and the private sector entities in the country to host their mobile applications providing citizen centric services related to health, education, agriculture, financial, online payments, electoral services, social welfare, food, transport, energy, etc. It has more than 1030 apps uploaded by government and private entities across India. Both, Organizational and

Individual developers can register themselves and upload apps. Only verified and signed Android Application Package (APK) files can be uploaded on the AppStore. Uploading and downloading of apps are free of cost.

Also, Government of India through National Informatics Centre has implemented the project name "National e Gov Appstore" which is a platform for hosting Government Web based applications and components that can be reused by other Centre / States Departments without investing cost and effort in the development of similar applications. Many applications have already been hosted on this platform including popular solutions like e-Procurement, e-Office, Vahan, e-Prison, e-Granthalaya Land Records etc. The details of the platform are available at https://apps.gov.in

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