

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2207
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 04.03.2020

DIGITAL SAFETY OF PEOPLE

2207. SHRI BANDI SANJAY KUMAR:
SHRI KOMATI REDDY VENKAT REDDY:

Will the Minister of Electronics & Information Technology be pleased to state:-

whether the Government is aware of the need to increase the digital safety of the people, especially women and children and if so, the details thereof and the action plan of the Government thereon?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)

Cyberspace, being a complex environment of people, software, hardware and services on the Internet, has distinct and unique characteristics as compared to physical space. The cyberspace is virtual, borderless and offers anonymity. In the recent years, social media and mobile eco-system have emerged as one of the important public communication channels. It brings social groups together in one virtual place for interaction in real time. Off late, use of social media has been seen all over the world as a key tool by criminals and anti-national elements to commit cyber crime especially against women. With a borderless cyberspace coupled with the possibility of instant communication and anonymity, the potential for committing cyber crime through the use of social media and internet is higher than ever in the country, like elsewhere in the world.

Government is cognizant of digital safety of people and has taken several steps that *inter alia*, include:

- (i) There are adequate legal provisions to deal with digital safety of persons particularly women and children. The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 has adequate provisions to deal with prevalent cyber crimes including the ones related to women. Sections 66E, 67, and 67A of the Act provides for the punishment and fine for violation of privacy and publishing or transmitting of obscene/sexually-explicit material in electronic form. Section 67B of the Act specifically provides stringent punishment for publishing, browsing or transmitting child pornography in electronic form.. Further, sections 354A and 354D of Indian Penal Code provide punishment for cyber bullying and cyber stalking. Also Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 provides for stringent punishment for using child for pornographic purposes and for storage of pornographic material involving child.
- (ii) Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules, 2011 notified under section 79 of the IT Act require that the intermediaries shall observe due diligence while

discharging their duties and shall publish the rules and regulations, privacy policy and user agreement for access or usage of the intermediary's computer resource by any person; inform their users not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is grossly harmful, harassing, obscene and invasive of another privacy or otherwise unlawful in any manner whatever. The intermediary shall publish on its website the name of the Grievance Officer and his contact details to address the grievances received from users and affected individuals / organizations.

- (iii) Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has launched an online national cyber crime reporting portal, (www.cybercrime.gov.in) to enable complainants to report complaints pertaining to all types of cyber crimes with special focus on cyber crimes against women and children.
- (iv) Government periodically blocks the websites containing extreme 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.
- (v) Government has issued direction to concerned Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to work out a suitable arrangement for receiving Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), UK list of CSAM websites/webpages on a dynamic basis and block access to child pornography webpages/websites.
- (vi) National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has published a booklet on "Child Victims of Cyber Crime – Legal Tool Kit" as a guide for investigating officers for better understanding of the cyber crime related laws in simple language.
