

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 380
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2021

BAN ON MOBILE APPLICATIONS

380 SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA:

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

- (a) the number of mobile applications that have been banned by Government since 2014;
- (b) the details of the banned mobile applications and reasons as to why each of the application was banned;
- (c) whether these apps have stored user's data outside India;
- (d) if so, the nature of the data that has been stored outside India and the risks associated with such storage for Indian users;
- (e) whether the apps that have been banned can still be accessed; and
- (f) whether virtual private networks can be used to access these apps?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b): A total of 296 mobile applications have been blocked by Government since 2014, under the provisions of section 69A of Information Technology (IT) Act 2000 and its rules namely "The Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009" in the interest of sovereignty & integrity of India, security of the State and public order.

(c) and (d): As per Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the requesting agency for blocking of these apps under section 69A of the IT Act, they had received several reports about misuse of some Chinese mobile Apps available on Android and IOS platforms for stealing and transmitting user data such as financial data, permission for accessing of all possible data available in device, etc. and real-time activity surreptitiously to servers located outside India. This has serious repercussions in light of national security and current tense border situation. Usage of these Apps by a large number of people in India enables compilation of huge data that can be collated, analysed, profiled and mined by elements who are hostile to the sovereignty and integrity of India and for activities detrimental to national security, security of India, defence of India as well as public order, apart from being detrimental to the interest of the general public.

(e) and (f): All these apps are blocked for public access in the country. Due to technology constraint, there is a possibility that some of the blocked apps can be accessed through Virtual Private Networks.
