

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1191
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2021

MISLEADING AND UNWANTED ADVERTISEMENTS

1191 SHRI DEEPAK PRAKASH:

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

- (a) whether companies are spreading misleading and unwanted advertisements through email, WhatsApp Messenger, Facebook etc. for their financial gains;
- (b) if so, the details of complaints received in this regard;
- (c) whether the above messages are against the traditions of Indian culture and society which are adversely affecting the younger generations; and
- (d) if so, the effective steps proposed to be taken to check the spread of said messages?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a) and (b): Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has noted media reports about misleading and unwanted advertisements appearing on various social media platforms. Further, MeitY has also received some grievances in this regard. No separate database of such grievances is maintained by MeitY. However for such grievances, users are advised to approach law enforcement agencies.

(c) and (d): Following the notification of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules in February 2021, intermediaries are required to adopt a robust grievance redressal mechanism including appointment of a grievance officer. These Rules empower users and make the intermediary platform accountable for timely redressal of grievances received. They are also expected to remove any unlawful content as and when brought to their knowledge either through a court order or through a notice by appropriate government or its authorised agency.

Further, Department of Consumer Affairs runs an online portal namely “Grievances Against Misleading Advertisements” (gama.gov.in), where consumers can lodge complaints relating to misleading advertisements on any media including the digital platforms.
