GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *194
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 02.12.2016

DECLINE IN INTERNET FREEDOM

***194. SHRI C.P.NARAYANAN:**

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there are complaints and assessments that internet freedom has declined in the country;

(b) whether Government proposes to make a detailed examination of such complaints, as this is a new and developing medium with possibilities that different parties may have different views on it; and

(c) whether Government will make sure that data stored and data being exchanged within the country will not be breached upon by criminal elements, leading to big losses to Indian citizens and Government agencies?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (c) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *194 FOR 02.12.2016 REGARDING DECLINE IN INTERNET FREEDOM

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(a) and (b): India is committed to an open and free internet both at the international and domestic level, and has reaffirmed its commitment to the multistakeholder model of global Internet Governance. Government of India stands fully committed to freedom of communication on the Internet including exchanging of ideas on social media as outlined in the constitution. Further, India has now over 462 million internet users and with several million new internet users joining every month, this has resulted in more and more Indians coming online and using the internet, giving them the freedom to experience and use the internet in every aspect of their lives. The growth of internet in India is an indication of its free and open nature.

(c): Government has put in place various measures to ensure that data stored and exchanged within the country are not breached by criminals. Some of these measures are:

i. The Information Technology Act, 2000 provides a comprehensive legal framework which includes punishment/ penalty for cyber crimes like damage to computer system & network, data leakage, tampering with computer source documents, stolen computer resource, identity theft, cheating by personation, violation of privacy, cyber terrorism, preservation and retention of information, unauthorized access to protected system, breach of confidentiality & privacy and publishing false Electronic signature certificate.

ii. Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) is the national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents. It provides Incident prevention and response services as well as security quality management services. It issues alerts and advisories regarding latest cyber threats and countermeasures on regular basis.

iii. Government has established National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) as per the provisions of Section 70A of the Information Technology Act for protection of Critical Information Infrastructure in the country.

iv. National Informatics Centre (NIC) is responsible for protecting Government networks, applications and mails on NIC servers. CERT-In provides the second layer of security and NCIIPC would be responsible for third layer for National Informatics Centre (NIC) networks. NIC protects the cyber resources from possible compromises through a layered security approach in the form of practices, procedures and technologies that are put in place.

v. Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has established security procedures and protocols. The architecture of Aadhaar ecosystem has been designed to ensure data security,

privacy, non-duplication, data integrity and other related management aspects of data in Aadhaar database.

vi. "National Information Security Policy & Guidelines" issued by Ministry of Home Affairs, encompasses Government and Public Sector organizations and associated entities and third parties, for protecting the information under their control or ownership during information's life-cycle including creation, storage, processing, accessing, transmission, destruction etc.

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