

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO.\*203**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 12.03.2020

**MISUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR HATEFUL  
AND DIVISIVE LANGUAGE**

**\*203. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:**

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the use of hateful and divisive language has increased in the past four years;
- (a) whether it is also a fact that the rise in use of social media by politicians has amplified this disturbing trend; and
- (c) if so, the details of number of complaints lodged and action taken so far including action taken for misusing social media?

**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. \*203 FOR 12-03-2020 REGARDING MISUSE OF SOCIAL  
MEDIA FOR HATEFUL AND DIVISIVE LANGUAGE**

.....

(a) : Cyber space is a complex environment of people, software, hardware and services on the Internet. With a borderless cyberspace coupled with the possibility of instant communication and anonymity alongwith technological advancement the reach of social media for interaction has increased globally. Because of such features, specifically the option to remain anonymous, there are certain miscreants who use abusive language on social media platforms.

(b): Due to the rapid growth in proliferation of mobile telephony, improvement in connectivity and development of new and convenient platforms, politicians across the world realise that social media is a very convenient and effective tool to communicate with their stakeholders. It is also to be noted that people across the spectrum including celebrities, industry leaders, sportsmen, artists etc. are resorting to greater use of social media and therefore attributing any misuse of social media exclusively to usage by a specific set of users does not pass muster.

(c): 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Constitution of India and States are primarily responsible for prevention, detection and investigation through their law enforcement machinery. The Law Enforcement Agencies take legal action against the cyber-crime offenders as per the provisions of applicable laws.

Wherever the situation warrants, under the provision of section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, Government blocks unlawful and malicious online content, in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above,. Under this provision, 1385, 2799 and 3635 URLs were blocked during the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively.

\*\*\*\*\*