

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 1908**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 03.07.2019

**LEAKS AND BREACHES OF USER DATA**

**1908. SHRI SANTOKH SINGH CHAUDHARY:**

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the reported leaks and breaches of user data in various companies;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government thereto;;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to punish companies for breach of user data and if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government is considering any legislative proposal to enhance the security and privacy of users on the Internet and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has asked the companies to take steps for protection of the user data and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir. Few instances of data breaches and leaks of user data by various companies were reported in the media. Government took notice of reports about leakage of data by Facebook and Cambridge Analytica, and in responses to notices sent to them, Facebook conveyed that there had been unauthorised data leakage by Cambridge Analytica. However, since the reply given by Cambridge Analytica was not adequately convincing, CBI has been asked to investigate this matter with regard to possible misuse by Cambridge Analytica. In addition, one incident of breach of personal data of Indian users from a social media company was reported to the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In). As per information available external actors exploited vulnerability in the form of software bugs impacting a feature provided for users on a social media platform. This allowed unauthorised access to users' account and information. The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) issued advisories to users regarding best practices to be followed for protection of account information while using Social Media.

(c) to (e) : Yes, Sir. Government is considering bringing data protection legislation in the country to strengthen the protection of personal data. A comprehensive legislation on data privacy is under formulation. The Government constituted a committee of expert on data protection, chaired by Justice (Retd) B.N. Srikrishna, Supreme Court of India to study various issues relating to data protection and come out with Data Protection Bill. The said committee has brought out a draft Personal Data Protection Bill (PDPB) on which consultations have been conducted and the bill is intended to be placed in parliament soon. The Bill seeks to bring in place a culture of privacy by design and promoting concepts such as consent framework, purpose limitation, storage limitation, and data minimization among various other privacy-oriented concepts. It also proposes Penalties and compensation for violation of the provisions.

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