

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3340
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.03.2022

TEK FOGG APP

3340.SHRI T.N. PRATHAPAN:

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

- (a) whether the Government tracks and monitors apps designed to manipulate social media platforms with the intent to spread hate speech and misinformation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government considering to investigate the role of the Tek Fogg App in spreading misinformation during the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests, Delhi communal violence, and COVID-19 pandemic in India;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government considering to investigate the Tek Fogg app which has been used to hijack Twitter's trending section and to harass journalists online;
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (g) whether the Government intends to take any action against Tek Fogg App which allows operatives to redirect readers of online news platforms to fake news websites; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b): The Government is committed to Open, Safe & Trusted and Accountable Internet for users. Government is aware of the risk and danger posed by growing phenomena of dissemination of wrong and hateful information through some social media platforms. This Ministry does not track and monitor Apps or content appearing on social media platforms or online App stores unless they are explicitly reported to this ministry including Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).

(c) to (h): Government has noted the news articles about an App, namely, 'Tek Fog' that has been allegedly used to manipulate social media platforms. The said App is not present on any of the prominent online App Stores and APK stores. No technical vulnerability that makes social media intermediaries susceptible to manipulation as reported in the news articles have been reported to, or observed by, this Ministry.

‘Police’ and ‘Public Order’ are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. States/UTs are primarily responsible for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes through their Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs). The Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) at Centre and States take appropriate legal action as per provisions of law and when appropriate.
