

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1645
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 05.03.2020

**ROGUE MESSAGING AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS THROUGH SOCIAL
MEDIA**

1645. DR. AMAR PATNAIK:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of any actions by political parties to utilise WhatsApp groups for campaigning;
- (b) whether such usage of social media groups is a risk to controlling proliferation of rogue messages and the details thereof; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken by Government to mitigate these risks and details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)

(a): No such information is reported to Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

(b) and (c): MeitY actively participated in a Committee specially constituted by Election Commission of India (ECI) to address the issue of misuse of digital and social media in election campaign. Based on the recommendations of the Committee, the ECI has worked closely with the industry. A code of commitment was developed in last general election held in 2019. Both Election Commission and social media platforms worked as per the code of commitment for speedy removal of any objectionable or unlawful content. ECI has also set up a Social Media Communication Hub which is responsible for dissemination of information related to election, thereby minimising spread of misinformation including fake clips through different social media platforms. MeitY also has been working closely with WhatsApp and other social media platforms. WhatsApp has introduced various features in its platform including limiting the forwarding of messages, labeling of forwarded messages as well as ease of reporting abusive messages.
