

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5235
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 24.07.2019

MARKETING ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

5235. SHRI SHIVAKUMAR C. UDASI:

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

- (a) whether social media platforms in recent times have been misused by companies for marketing their products and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (b) whether the social media companies are letting their platforms being misused for criminal activities; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): 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, the potential for misuse of social media platforms by companies for marketing their products and for criminal activities is a global issue.

The social media platforms are Intermediaries as defined in the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000. Section 79 of the Act and The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011 require that the Intermediaries shall observe due diligence while discharging their duties and shall inform the users of computer resources not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is, inter alia, grossly harmful, harassing, defamatory, libellous, invasive of another's privacy, hateful, or racially, ethnically objectionable, disparaging, or otherwise unlawful in any manner. They are also expected to remove any unlawful content relatable to Article 19(2) of the Constitution of India as and when brought to their knowledge either through a court order or through a notice by appropriate government or its agency.

Government regularly interacts with social media sites regarding the steps to be taken to make social media safer. Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as well as Police are in regular touch with various social media platforms to effectively address the issue of removal of objectionable content
