

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1995**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 03.07.2019

**MISUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

**1995. SHRI HEMANT TUKARAM GODSE:**

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

- (a) whether the Government has held any meeting with legal experts and privacy advocates to discuss various issues relating to making social media safer and to govern social media platforms in the country;
- (b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken/proposed to take any concrete and effective steps to check the misuse of social media by criminals and anti-national elements; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regard?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) and(b): Yes, Sir. The social media platforms are intermediaries under the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000. Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) had proposed to amend the Information Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines) Rules, 2011 notified under section 79 of the IT Act, 2000. The proposed amendments to the said Rules were published on MeitY website on 24.12.2018 inviting public comments by 15.01.2019. The proposed amendments were intensely debated in the electronic and print media. In order to convey the perspectives of proposed amendments, a meeting was held with legal experts and the privacy advocates on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Based on the discussions, MeitY extended the deadline of submission of comments to 31.01.2019. The comments so received were published on MeitY's website on 06.02.2019 inviting counter comments by 14.02.2019. MeitY received 171 comments and 80 counter comments from individual, civil society, industry associations and organisations.

(c) and (d): 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 of misuse of social media is a global issue. Government is committed to freedom of speech and expression and privacy of its citizens as enshrined in the constitution of India. Government does not monitor content appearing on internet. However, Government regularly interacts with social media sites regarding the steps to be taken to make social media safer.

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