

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3897
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 11.12.2019

ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

3897. SHRIMATI SAJDA AHMED:

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

- (a) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to prevent illegal activities on social media;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to formulate a law on social media regulation and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the number of complaints received by the Government pertaining to violation of sovereignty of the country and privacy of an individual along with the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b): The social media platforms are intermediaries as defined in the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000. They have to follow certain due diligence as prescribed in the Information Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines) Rules, 2011 notified under section 79 of the IT Act. Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) has proposed to amend the said Rules and invited public comments. Based on the comments, amendment to the Rules are being finalised.

(c): Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 empowers Government to block any information generated, transmitted, received, stored or hosted in any computer resource in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above. A total of 4192 and 3847 complaints for blocking of URLs under the above said provisions of section 69A of the Act were received by MeitY during the year 2018 and 2019 (till August) respectively. Government has taken appropriate action for blocking of URLs following the norms prescribed in the rules notified under section 69A of the Act. Data for complaints pertaining to violation of sovereignty of the country is not maintained separately. Further, complaint related to privacy of individual is beyond the legal scope of section 69A. MeitY is working on the Personal Data Protection Bill to safeguard the privacy of citizens, and proposes to table it in Parliament.
