

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 538
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.09.2020

BAN ON APPs

538. DR. AMOL RAMSING KOLHE:
SHRI KULDEEP RAI SHARMA:
DR. DNV SENTHILKUMAR S.:
DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE:
SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B.:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE

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

- (a) whether the Government has banned a number of popular Chinese mobile applications, including top social media platforms such as TikTok, Helo and WeChat and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (b) the reason for inability of the Government to develop indigenous popular apps to counter the aforementioned Chinese apps in the country;
- (c) whether the Government has invited Indian developers to come up with apps in a range of segments such as office productivity, social networking, e-learning, news, games, health and wellness, agri-tech, fin-tech, entertainment, and speech translation;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the response received by the Government so far; and
- (e) whether the Government has taken any steps under Digital India Aatmanirbhar Bharat Innovate Challenge, to develop indigenous apps that will be as popular as Chinese apps considering the fact that India has significant social media users and apps and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a): The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has blocked 224 mobile applications, including TikTok, Helo and WeChat under the provisions of section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India and security of State.

(b), (c), (d) and (e): From time to time, the government of India launches apps for citizens to promote its Digital India initiative. MeitY, in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission of Niti Aayog, launched Digital India Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Innovate Challenge to identify the best Indian Apps that are already being used by citizens and have the potential to scale and become world class Apps in their respective categories. A total of 6,940 applications under various categories have been received.
