

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3545**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 22.3.2023

**HARASSMENT AND TROLLING ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**

**3545. SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B.:**

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the growing instances of harassment and trolling on social media platforms by radicals;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government to address the same and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government acknowledges that social media platforms are increasingly being used by some political parties to propagate an agenda;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the manner in which the Government is curbing such activities?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a) to (e): The policies of the Government are aimed at ensuring an Open, Safe and Trusted and Accountable Internet for its users. With the expansion of the Internet and more and more Indians coming online, the number of Indians exposed to misuse of social media platforms, including for harassment and trolling, has also grown.

To help achieve this aim, the Central Government, in exercise of powers conferred by the Information Technology Act, 2000, has made the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. These rules cast specific obligation on intermediaries, including social media intermediaries, to observe due diligence and provide that if they fail to observe such due diligence, they shall no longer be exempt from their liability under law for third-party information or data or communication link hosted by them. Such due diligence includes the following:

- (i) An intermediary shall make reasonable efforts to cause its user not to host, display, publish, transmit or share any information that is insulting or harassing on the basis of gender, racially or ethnically objectionable or harmful to child, or which impersonates another person or intentionally communicates any misinformation or information which is patently false and untrue or misleading in nature, or which violates any law for the time being in force.
- (ii) The intermediary shall not host, store or publish unlawful information prohibited under law for the time being in force, on a voluntary basis on violation of the above, and on actual knowledge upon receipt of a grievance or court order or notice from the appropriate government or its agency.
- (iii) In case the intermediary is a significant social media intermediary (*i.e.*, a social media intermediary having more than 50 lakh registered users in India), to additionally observe due diligence in terms of appointing a Chief Compliance Officer and a nodal contact person for 24x7 coordination with law enforcement agencies.

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