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MPs Speaking:	[The Minister for Communications and Information (Assoc Prof Dr Yaacob Ibrahim), Er Dr Lee Bee Wah]

## **COMPLAINTS AGAINST ILLEGAL MONEYLENDERS WHO MAKE UNSOLICITED CALLS OR MESSAGES**

19 Er Dr Lee Bee Wah asked the Minister for Communications and Information since the introduction of the Personal Data Protection Act (a) how many complaints have been received against illegal moneylenders who make unsolicited telephone calls, or send unsolicited fax, SMS messages and e-mails; and (b) what is the procedure to lodge complaints against these unsolicited communications.

The Minister for Communications and Information (Assoc Prof Dr Yaacob Ibrahim): Mr Speaker, the Personal Data Protection Act, or PDPA, includes provisions that regulate unsolicited communications from businesses. The Do Not Call, or DNC Registry, was established under the PDPA so that individuals who do not wish to receive unsolicited marketing calls and messages can register their telephone and fax numbers. Organisations are required to check the DNC Registry and refrain from calling, faxing, or sending marketing messages to the numbers on the Registry.

Sir, the DNC Registry provisions of the PDPA came into force in January 2014. Since then, the Personal Data Protection Commission, or PDPC, has received and investigated some 14,000 DNC-related complaints against businesses, of which more than 4,600 resulted in the PDPC taking enforcement or other regulatory action.

In addition, Sir, the PDPC has received around 10,000 complaints each year related to suspected unlicensed moneylending, which is a serious criminal offence under other laws. These complaints were referred to the Police, who are the relevant authority to investigate unlicensed moneylending offences. Members of the public who receive or are aware of such activities or communications should lodge a Police report or call the National Crime Prevention Council's "X Ah Long" Hotline at 1800-924-5664. Members of the public are urged not to reply or respond to these SMSes or phone calls.

