GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 1276
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2021

COMMENTS TO WOMEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

1276. SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware of several twitter accounts, who regularly post horribly misogynistic comments including rape threats to women on social media, if so, the details thereof;
(b) the action that has been taken by the Ministry to terminate such hateful accounts from twitter; and
(c) the steps that have been taken to bring such people to justice and properly educate them on gender sensitisation?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (c): Steps have been taken to spread awareness, issue of alerts/ advisories, training of law enforcement agencies, improving cyber forensic facilities including properly educate them on gender sensitisation. These steps help to prevent such cases and expediated investigation. Ministry of Women and Child Development also has a dedicated e-mail (complaint-mwcd@gov.in) to address and resolve the issues of women including hateful conduct and stalking on Social Media platforms including Twitter.

The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 (21 of 2000) has provisions regarding cheating by personation (section 66D), violation of privacy (section 66E), publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form (section 67), publishing or transmitting material containing sexually explicit act, etc. in electronic form (section 67A), publishing or transmitting material depicting children in sexually explicit act, etc. in electronic form (section 67B) etc. Rule 3 (2) (b) of Information Technology (Intermediaries guidelines) Rules, 2011 provides for an obligation for Intermediaries (Social media platforms) to inform users of computer resources not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is grossly harmful, harassing, blasphemous defamatory, obscene, pornographic, pedophilic, libelous, invasive of another's privacy, including taking steps to terminate such hateful accounts from twitter.

Ministry of Home Affairs implements a scheme namely 'Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC)' funded under Nirbhaya Fund, under which an online Cyber Crime reporting portal, (www.cybercrime.gov.in) has been launched, to enable public to report complaints pertaining to rape/ gang rape imageries or sexually explicit content, Child Pornography/ Child Sexual Abuse Material. This portal facilitates

the public to lodge all types of cyber crimes with special focus on cyber crime against women and children. It is a centralized mechanism for reporting incidents of all types of cyber crimes and allows decentralized dealing of each complaint by concerned State/UT Government, District Cyber Cell or the concerned law enforcement officer, as per crime jurisdiction and provisions of law. Besides, a toll free number 155260 has also been made operational for citizens to assist them in lodging online complaints in their own language. National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) has been notified as an agency of Government of India to issue notices to intermediaries under section 79(3)(b) of the IT Act for removal of Child Pornography, rape and Gang Rape content.

“Police” and “Public Order” are State subjects as per the Constitution of India. States/UTs are primarily responsible for prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes through their law enforcement machinery. These law enforcement machinery/agencies under the Governments of respective States/UTs conducts surveillance and take legal action as per provisions of law against the criminals misusing the social media, including twitter accounts, who regularly post horribly misogynistic comments including rape threats to women on social media.

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