GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1689
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.09.2020

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING LOCKDOWN

1689.   SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state:
(a)   the details of the apps banned by the Government during the last six months;
(b)   whether the Government has conducted any study regarding the use of social media during the COVID-19 lockdown and if so, the details thereof;
(c)   whether the Government proposes to use the social media in a positive manner during the COVID-19;
(d)   if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon;
(e) whether the Government proposes to strengthen the internet facility considering the digital administration and if so, the details thereof; and
(f) whether the internet facility is not available in rural areas and if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government is this regard?

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 apps 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. Blocking of such Apps has been done on national security concerns and thus linkage with any country may not be disclosed in public domain.

(b):   MeitY has not conducted any such specific study.
(c) and (d): Government through MyGov platform has initiated the dissemination of easy to understand and consistent information related to Corona outbreak through social media. The details of such steps are placed at Annexure.

Also Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, on 31" March, 2020, launched a dedicated Twitter handle @COVlDNewsByMlB for dissemination of information on COVID-19 and to generate awareness, dispel myths and educate the general amongst the public on COVID-19. During the past five months, the handle has posted around 14,200 tweets on the subject. Apart from this, Press Information Bureau has also used Social Media for dissemination of COVID-19 related information.

(e) and (f): As per the information provided by Department of Telecom, there are 29.83 rural internet subscribers per 100 population in the country as on 31.12.2019 as per latest "The Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicators" report of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) dated 30th June, 2020.

Internet connectivity is being provided by various Telecom Service Providers and Internet Service Providers in the country. To improve access to internet connectivity in rural areas, BharatNet project under Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF), envisages provision of broadband/ Internet connectivity to the Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. Further, National Broadband Mission was launched on 17th December 2019 with a vision provide affordable and universal access of broadband for all.

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<div align="right">**<u>Annexure</u>**</div>

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MyGov Initiatives to fight against COVID19

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1. **Social Media Initiatives for Communications on Corona:**

   To disseminate authentic, easy to understand and consistent information related to Corona outbreak through social media, MyGov has been a nodal agency. To make the communication effective, MyGov has taken the following steps:

   (a) On the website of MyGov, a dedicated page on Corona outbreak has been created. This page has got more than 9.71 Crore page views till 14thSeptember 2020.

   (b) Regular updates on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are being provided by MyGov.

   (c) MyGov has started WhatsApp CORONA Helpdesk on "9013151515" & 9013353535 WhatsApp number. This is an automated Chatbot which provides automatic answers to queries posted by users. Since its launch on 19th March till 14thSeptember a total of 29.96million (2.99 Crore) users have used this service with 81.01 Million Users messages.

   (d) MyGov has set up a Corona Helpdesk on Telegram mobile app as well which has been joined by 26.17 Lakh users.

   (e) A dedicated Facebook hub on Corona has been created where people can get the latest information at one place. This Corona Hub has got more than 12.2 lakh followers.

   (f) MyGov is also disseminating its COVID19 related contents with its Social Media channels viz, 289.87 Crore reach using Facebook, 17.53 Crore impressions using Twitter, 12.84 Crore impressions using Instagram, 7.39 million Videos views on YouTube.

   (g) On Janta Curfew (22nd March, 7 am to 9 pm), MyGov launched an online pledge by the name "I Support Janta Curfew". 9.18 Lakh people took this pledge online.

   (h) MyGov has also launched an online pledge by the name of "I Pledge to Stay Home". 8.39 Lakh people have taken this pledge.

   (i) MyGov has also sought suggestions from citizens to fight Corona outbreak. 1.56 lakh suggestions was received from citizens on MyGov.

   (j) Public Food & Night Shelters on Maps: More than 11,000 Food/ Night Shelters from 743 Cities of 32 States/ UTs have been mapped in coordination of MyGov, concerned Ministry and Google.

   (k) 700 testing labs on Search, Assistant, and Maps across 300 cities have been also added on the Map.

   (l) Created MyGov Podcasts with more than 148 Podcasts and also shared with Community Radios for further dissemination

   (m) To tackle Phycological issues during Covid19, launched Positive Harmonies with more than 162 Positive Harmony videos in 23 weeks

(n)   To help increase the downloads of AarogyaSetu App, MyGov launched nation wide campaign viz SetuMera Body Guard with Actor Ajay Devgn, Mask Force with Indian Cricketers, Mera Mask Meri Pahchan

(o)   MyGov is also facilitating the Media section of AarogyaSetu app with relevant videos, articles and guidelines related to air passengers, how to make a mask and others.

(p)   MyGov Created infographics to explain different colors shown on AarogyaSetu Home Screen and what do these colors signify was also used in a detailed social media campaign

(q)   Under various Unlock phases for citizen awareness, MyGov created SOP infographics for Offices, Restaurants, Malls, Religious Places, Hotels etcand have also been hosted on Transforming India-COVID19 page.

(r)   To address the Social Stigma around Corona, a nationwide campaign featuring Actor Amitabh Bachchan launched followed by Pledge to fight Social Stigma around Covid19 with so around 92K Pledges.

(s)   To seek citizen's commitment, Render My Service for #Fight Against Corona Pledge been launched and Pledge been taken by 1.37 L users, under #ItsMyDuty.

(t)   To break the Myths & Fake News around Corona, Myth Busters and Fact Checks been promoted to help citizens.

(u)   **MyGov Leveraged** new media platform like Roposo, Share Chat application to communicate about COVID to the larger user base.

(v)   MyGov solicited inputs from citizens through a campaign named, "Share Your Ideas to Keep Elders Safe During COVID-19"

(w)   MyGov promoted and created campaign in Immunity Boosting in collaboration with Ministry of Ayush

(x)   To reach larger citizen base, MyGov has sent 6.5 Crore Emailers on Weekly basis using Sampark Email services till mid of June and thereafter to MyGov users only.

(y)   MyGov is also disseminating important communication like PM CARES Fund, Download AarogyaSetu App, Mann Ki Baat using its CBPS service, with presence on more than 250 Government Sites.

(z)   MyGov disseminated all cabinet decisions, Ministry schemes, policies related to citizens welfare regarding the ways to tackle COVID 19 through its social media channels.

2. Promoting Volunteering and Donations:

(a)   Using Self for Society platform (website and app), MyGov and NDMA have launched volunteer management module, where 2,24,194 individuals and 7,239 organizations have registered for volunteering.

(b)   Self for Society platform is also being used for receiving donation of essential goods like sanitizers, masks, gloves etc. So far 12.30 Lakh items have been Pledged to donate.

3. Encouraging Innovation:

- Ministry of Electronics and IT has stated a **"COVID 19 Solution Challenge"** to enable participants of Startups &companies to offer technologies& innovative solutions, Bioinformatics, Datasets, Apps for diagnosis etc. that can be leveraged for fighting against CORONA. Challenge got concluded on 30th April, 20,559 Entries have been received, 1320 Startups have shared their ideas and over 30 Lakh people have visited this page. The evaluation phase is under process.

- **Innovation Challenge to Develop a Video Conferencing Solution:** On 13th April, MyGov in collaboration with Meityhas launched an innovation challenge to develop an Indian video conferencing solution to meet the needs of work from home. We got 1,983 Entries in Video Conferencing Solution.Kerala-based Vconsolwon the challenge.
- **Shri Shakti Challenge:** To support and promote women entrepreneurs and women led startups as also solutions by entrepreneurs impacting a large number of women, UN Women and MyGov have collaborated for COVID-19 Solution challenge. Shri Shakti Challenge received 1,265 entries. Stage I of the Challenge was concluded with shortlisting of 11 Female individuals/entrepreneurs from across the Nation . Mentorship of these 11 shortlisted candidates are under process to select the final 3 winners.
- **Drug Discovery Hackathon 2020 (DDH2020):** Through the MyGov platform MyGov have invited all those who wish to join the open source drug discovery Hackathon against Covid-19. DDH2020 is a joint initiative of AICTE, CSIR and supported by Office of Principal Scientific Advisor, Govt. of India, NIC and MyGov.
- MyGov is supporting COVID-19 Biomedical Waste Treatment, an Innovation Challenge hosted by Ministry of commerce and Industry.

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