

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 493
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16TH SEPTEMBER, 2020
DATA PRIVACY OF PUBLIC WiFi**

†493. SHRI RAVI KISHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether adequate steps have been taken/are proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure privacy of user data and security of free and public WiFi connections being provided at many places in the country such as railway stations, airports and other public places and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to make it mandatory to display information regarding safe internet browsing and modalities of its use for the above places; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)**

(a) Sir, the Government has taken adequate steps to ensure privacy of user data and security of free and public Wi-Fi connections being provided at many places in the country such as railway stations, airports and other public places. Intentionally damaging or tampering with telegraphs or unlawfully attempting to learn the contents of messages is a punishable offence as per the Section 24, 25 & 26 of the Indian Telegraph Act. Moreover, DoT has issued instructions in February 2009 to Telecom Service Providers who have been granted Licenses for provision of Telecom services regarding safeguards in provision of Wi-Fi Internet services in the delicensed frequency band for secure use of Wi-Fi services including those provided at public places i.e. Hotel, Restaurants, Airports, Malls, Shops, Railway Stations through Hotspot.

Further, a document on Security in Public Wi-Fi Implementations-Best Practices was circulated to Internet service Providers (ISPs) for implementation.

(b) The implementation of License clauses related with the Security, Privacy and Data confidentiality, the instructions issued in 2009 regarding safeguards in provisioning of Wi-Fi Internet services and the document containing the Best Practices on Security in Public Wi-Fi enables the display of information regarding a Secure Wi-Fi on the user terminal/Mobile phone being used. This also enables a simple, secure and safe internet access by the users through the Wi-Fi obviating the need for display of information regarding safe internet browsing and modalities of its use at these places.

(c) The program of MeitY titled “Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA)” has an objective of Creation of Mass Information Security Awareness towards academic, general and Government users for the period 2015 - 2020. Further, Government has instructed Telecom Service Providers/Internet Service Providers under Unified License (Similar provisions in other Licences also) to protect the interest of the stakeholders/customers and privacy of the individual through License conditions.
