

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.*236
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 10.03.2021

HATE SPEECH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

***236. SHRI MITESH RAMESHBHAI PATEL (BAKABHAI)
SHRIMATI SHARDABEN ANILBHAI PATEL:**

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

- (a) whether the use of hateful and divisive language on social media platforms has increased during the last four years; and
- (b) if so, the number of complaints regarding the misuse of social media platforms registered so far along with the details of the action taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

- (a) and (b): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *236 FOR 10-03-2021
REGARDING HATE SPEECH ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

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(a) and (b): Cyber space is a complex environment of people, software, hardware and services on the Internet providing a possibility of instant communication by anyone from anywhere around the world. The global outreach of social media platforms to allow interaction among internet users for sharing, hosting, storing, transmitting user content has increased tremendously. Because of such features, specifically the option to remain anonymous, there are certain miscreants who use hateful and divisive language on social media platforms.

'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Constitution of India and States are primarily responsible for prevention, detection and investigation through their law enforcement machinery. The Law Enforcement Agencies take legal action against the cyber-crime offenders as per the provisions of applicable laws.

Wherever the situation warrants, under the provision of section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, Government blocks unlawful and malicious online content, in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above. Under this provision, 1385, 2799, 3603 and 9849 URLs/accounts/webpages were blocked during the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively.

Government has recently notified Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, in which many of these issues have been

addressed. The social media platforms are enjoined to develop a robust grievance redressal system.
