IMPLEMENTATION OF WHATSAPP PRIVACY POLICY

2754.   SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:

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

(a) whether instant messaging platform WhatsApp has extended the deadline for implementation of its recent privacy policy changes which has triggered a massive backlash, to May 15 instead of the earlier scheduled February 8, 2021 and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(b) whether a petition by business lobbies in the capital has sought injunction against the updated terms of WhatsApp in Court and for issuing directions to the Centre for laying down regulatory guidelines to ensure that WhatsApp does not share data with third parties or Facebook Inc and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)

(a):   Yes, Sir.   Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) took cognizance of the WhatsApp announcement of its new Privacy Policy stated to be applicable to Indian users from February 2021. To safeguard the interest of Indian users, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has asked WhatsApp to review the proposed privacy policy changes and also to explain the rationale of the same.

WhatsApp in its public blog dated 15.01.2021 has stated that it has extended the date of implementation of privacy policy change to 15.05.2021.

(b):   A petition has been filed by Confederation of All India Traders before the Hon'ble Supreme Court to issue a writ of Mandamus directing the Union of India to lay down guidelines in exercise of its powers of the Information Technology Act and under Constitution of India to ensure that WhatsApp does not share any data of its users with any third party or Facebook and its companies for any purpose whatsoever. The case has been disposed off as the petition was withdrawn.

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