GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UN STARRED QUESTION NO.3919
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.03.2021

ONLINE ABUSE OF CHILDREN

3919. SHRIMATI GODDETI MADHAVI:
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Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a)   the total number of cases of online child sexual abuse that have been registered/reported across the country;
(b)   whether the Government has proposed to implement measures to improve the online safety of children in the country; and
(c)   if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) As per information provided by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) the total number of cases registered under Cyber Crime against Children (involving communication devices as medium/target) during 2019 was 305. As informed by NCRB, the latest data pertains to 2019.

(b) & (c) The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act had been amended in 2019 to include the definition of child pornography under Section 2(da) and punishment provided under Section 14 and Section 15 of the Act.

Further the Government has taken several steps to tackle cyber crime against children. These, inter alia, include :

i.   Provisions to deal with cyber crime against children under Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000. Section 67B of the Act provides stringent punishment for publishing, browsing or transmitting of material depicting children in sexually explicit act, etc. in electronic form. Further, sections 354A

and 354D of Indian Penal Code, 1860 provide punishment for cyber bullying and cyber stalking.

ii. The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 notified under the IT Act, specifies that the intermediaries shall inform the users of computer resource not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is, inter alia, obscene, pornographic, paedophilic, harms minor in any way; violates any law for the time being in force; etc.

iii. Government periodically blocks the websites containing extreme child sexual abuse material (CSAM) based on INTERPOL's "worst of list" received through Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the national nodal agency for Interpol in India.

iv. Government has issued an order to concerned Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to work out a suitable arrangement for receiving Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), UK list of CSAM websites/webpages on a dynamic basis and block access to child pornography webpages/websites.

v. Department of Telecommunication has requested all Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to make suitable arrangement to spread awareness among their subscribers about the use of parental control filters in the end-user machines through messages of email, invoices, SMS, website, etc.

vi. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has issued guidelines on 18.08.2017 to schools on the safe and secure use of Internet. This circular directs schools to install effective firewalls, filtering and monitoring software mechanisms in all the computers and deploy effective security policies.

vii. The Government is implementing a comprehensive central sector scheme, namely "Centre for Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC)" to handle all issues related to check all cyber-crime against women and children including child pornography.

viii. National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal, www.cybercrime.gov.in has been launched by the Government to enable citizens to online report complaints pertaining to all types of cyber crimes with special focus on cyber crimes against women and children. Complaints reported on this portal are attended by the respective Law Enforcement Authorities of States. A nation-wide helpline number [155260] is also made functional to help public in filing complaints through the portal.

ix. The Government has published a handbook for Adolescents/Students on Cyber Safety, in order to make them aware about various types of cyber crimes and how to protect themselves from such crimes. The handbook is available on www.mha.gov.in and www.cybercrime.gov.in. The handbook is also shared on NCERT website by Ministry of Education.

x. To strengthen the mechanism to deal with cyber crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, the Central Government has taken steps for spreading awareness about cyber crimes; issuance of alerts/advisories; capacity building/ training of law enforcement personnel/prosecutors/ judicial officers; improving cyber forensic facilities; etc.

xi. The Government is implementing a scheme of 'Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)' to deal with cyber crimes in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

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