

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2690
TO BE ANSWERED ON 4TH AUGUST, 2021**

SECURITY OF FREE AND PUBLIC WI-FI CONNECTIONS

2690. SHRI SUDHAKAR TUKARAM SHRANGARE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any mechanism to ensure security of free and public Wi-Fi connections at various places like railway stations, airports, public places etc. and privacy of users data;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) & (c) Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi) connections are facilitated through the Licensed Internet Service Provider (ISP) and their franchisee or entities registered under the Prime Minister Wireless Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) framework. The Government has implemented adequate mechanism 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 through the compliance to following measures by these entities in their networks:

- i. Intentionally damaging or tampering with telegraphs or unlawfully attempting to learn the contents of messages or making away with or altering, or unlawfully intercepting or disclosing messages, or divulging purport of signals are punishable offences as per the Section 24, 25 & 26 of The Indian Telegraph Act - 1885
- ii. Clause no. 37.1 to 37.4 chapter V of the Unified License (UL) mandates ISP to deploy appropriate mechanism to meet the requirements of confidentiality, security and privacy of user data.
- iii. The Security Guidelines for PM-WANI provides for following:
 - a. Provisions by Public data Office Aggregator (PDOA) for storage of user data for one year to ensure compliance with legal provisions, as required.

- b. User data privacy is to be ensured by App Providers and PDOA with complete user data and usage logs to be stored within India.
- c. Provisions by the App Provider, PDOA and Central Registry Provider to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of any information about a third party to whom it provides the service.

DoT has issued a document in February 2009 titled ‘instructions under the internet service license regarding provision of Wi-Fi Internet services in the delicensed frequency band’ for secure use of Wi-Fi services followed by a document in August 2015 on ‘Security in Public Wi-Fi Implementations-Best Practices.’
