INDIA REMAINS AMONG TOP REQUESTERS OF FACEBOOK'S USER DATA

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Facebook also said in took action on more than 25 million pieces of hate speech content between January and March this year. | Photo Credit: Reuters

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India's government submitted the second-largest number of requests for user data from Facebook during the last six months of 2020, falling only behind the U.S.

A total of 40,300 requests were made in India, nearly 13% more than the first six months last year, of which 52% of requests were produced by Facebook. Globally, government requests increased 10% between July and December compared with the first half of 2020, led by the U.S., India, Germany, France, Brazil and the U.K., Facebook said in its half-yearly Transparency report.

The world's largest social network restricted access to 878 items in response to directions from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for violation of 69A of the IT Act, 2000, including content against security of the state and public order.

India topped the list of global internet disruptions in the same period with 48 instances of shutdowns in Jammu and Kashmir. Internet disruptions refer to intentional restrictions on connectivity that limit people's ability to access the internet or specific websites and apps. Other countries in the list include Myanmar, Yemen, Tanzania and Syria.

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The prevalence of hate speech on the platform decreased to about 0.06% of all views in the first 3 months of 2021, from about 0.08% in the last three months last year. This comes after the Facebook allowed users to personalise their news feed and reduce problematic content, according to the company.

The California-based company introduced artificial intelligence-powered tools last year to combat hate speech and violent content on its platform, and said it helped filter inappropriate content, according to the Community Standards Enforcement Report.

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Bengio is expected to lead a new AI research unit at Apple under John Giannandrea, senior vice president of machine learning and AI strategy, two people familiar with the matter said.