

EU lawmakers push for cybersecurity, data audit of Facebook

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A draft resolution submitted Thursday to the EU Parliament's civil liberties and justice committee urged Facebook to accept "a full and independent audit of its platform investigating data protection and security of personal data."

Claude Moraes, the chairman of the EU parliamentary committee who drafted the resolution, said the probes "need to be done." (Representational Image)

Brussels: European Union lawmakers appear set this month to demand audits of Facebook by Europe's cybersecurity agency and data protection authority in the wake of the Cambridge Analytica scandal.

A draft resolution submitted Thursday to the EU Parliament's civil liberties and justice committee urged Facebook to accept "a full and independent audit of its platform investigating data protection and security of personal data."

The assembly summoned Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg in May to testify about allegations that political consulting firm Cambridge Analytica used the data of millions of Facebook users to target voters during political campaigns, including the one that brought US President Donald Trump to office.

Claude Moraes, the chairman of the EU parliamentary committee who drafted the resolution, said the probes "need to be done."

"Not only have Facebook's policies and actions potentially jeopardized citizens' personal data, but then they have also had an impact on electoral outcomes and on the trust citizens pose in digital solutions and platforms," Moraes said.

The committee aims to adopt the resolution, which will almost certainly be modified, by Oct. 10 and put it to the full assembly for endorsement in late October, well ahead of EU elections next May.

The resolution also urges European justice authorities to investigate any alleged misuse of the online political space by foreign forces, and calls on the EU's executive Commission to propose ways to boost the powers of Europe's public prosecutor's office so it can tackle crimes against electoral infrastructure.

It notes "with regret" that Facebook did not send staff with the right technical knowledge to answer lawmakers' questions and "points out that such an approach is detrimental to the trust European citizens have in social platforms."

Zuckerberg was questioned in Brussels on May 22, but the lawmakers used up most of the speaking time with their own remarks, leaving the Facebook chief with little time to respond.

- AP