

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1431
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2011
SPREADING MISINFORMATION ONLINE
Joshi Shri Mahesh

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to counter spreading misinformation online by the hostile countries to tarnish the image of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) to (c): Yes, Madam. As per available information, the information Technology Act, 2000 has been amended by the Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 w.e.f. 27.10.2009. Section 69A of the information Technology Act, 2000 empowers Government to block information from public access under specific conditions if:- (i) interest of sovereignty and integrity of India,(ii) defence of India, (iii) security of the State, (iv) friendly relations with foreign States or (v) public order or (vi) for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above. The provision empowers the Government to block any misinformation online that tarnish the image of the country.

Further, Intermediaries are required to follow due diligence and safeguards under section 79 of the said Act. In this regard, the Intermediaries Guidelines Rules, 2011 have been notified on 11.04.2011. Rule 3 of these Rules specifies the objectionable information. Rule 4 of these Rules provides for disabling of such objectionable information by the intermediary. Any aggrieved person can request the intermediary to take down or disable objectionable content under this provision. The intermediary has to act within 36 hours.