

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:497

ANSWERED ON:07.09.2011

ACCESS TO TELECOM AND INTERNET SERVICES

Bhagora Shri Tarachand;Botcha Lakshmi Smt. Jhansi

**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Ministry of Home Affairs has asked the Department of Telecommunications to direct all the telecom and internet service providers including Blackberry to submit their plan to allow lawful access to all their services;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether suitable directions have been sent to all the telecom and internet service providers in this regard;
- (d) if so, the reaction of various service providers thereto;
- (e) whether the Government also proposes to monitor the social networking websites like Facebook and Twitter for security reasons;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the action taken by the Government on the above matters so far?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) to (g) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (g) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 497 FOR 7TH SEPTEMBER, 2011 REGARDING "ACCESS TO TELECOM AND INTERNET SERVICES "

(a) to (d): Madam, Government has mandated all the Telecom Service Providers and the Internet Service Providers to provide the Lawful Interception and Monitoring facilities to the security agencies for all the services including blackberry services, as a part of their license agreement. Ministry of Home Affairs has also reiterated this requirement to Department of Telecommunications. As such Security agencies are able to intercept the services including Blackberry through the lawful interception facilities provided by the Telecom Service Providers. However, Security Agencies have intimated that they are not able to decrypt some encrypted intercepted communication to readable format. The Telecom Service Providers have stated that they have provided the requisite interception facilities to Security Agencies. With regard to decrypting the intercepted communication, it is stated that Telecom Service Providers are mere carriers, who are not supposed to know the content of the intercepted messages and may not be able to decrypt the content.

(e) to (g): World over several services providers including social networking websites like Facebook and Twitter are providing services for sharing audio, video, image, email, data and accessing other web services anytime and anywhere in a secure manner. The security of these services is achieved through encryption technology. These services are mostly availed by the citizens across world through Internet either in their individual capacity or as part of commercial activities. There are multifarious aspects involved in dealing with the issues related to such communication services such as technical, international relationship, legal and regulatory policy, commercial and security requirements etc.

A technical committee established by the Government analysed all the above issues in order to work out an appropriate solution to the problem which balances the requirements of Security Agencies with the secured communication needs of trade, commerce and industry. The complexities involved in the issue resulted in the committee being unable to come out with unanimous conclusive recommendations. The report of the committee and the comments of some of the members on the Report were referred to a high level panel of experts who have since submitted their final recommendations on a focused and practical approach to the entire issue. However, the Government regularly interacts with all stakeholders to resolve the issues arising from time to time.