

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3412

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SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE

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

- (a) whether uploading of morphed photographs of our national leaders and other celebrities on various social networking sites have been reported;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government has formulated/propose to formulate code of conduct/regulatory mechanism for social networking platforms to check their misuse; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard so far?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT)

(a): Social networking sites have emerged as an online mediivm/platform to enable users to share ideas, activities and express views/opinions on specific topics. Such sites can be accessed by all sections of societies. Most of such sites are hosted outside the country. Morphed photographs of our national leaders and other celebrities have been uploaded on some social networking sites.

(b), (c) & (d): During the period April 2010 to November 2011, a total no. of 57 incidents of misuse of social networking sites, related to publishing of objectionable content pertaining to political leaders, religion, national security and individuals were reported to the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).

Government does not regulate content and there is no proposal to formulate any mechanism to regulate the content. However, Government has notified Information Technology (Intermediaries guidelines) Rules, 2011 under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000. These rules provide for the intermediaries to observe due diligence and safeguards. Rule 3(2) and Rule 3(4) of these rules provide for taking down objectionable content hosted on the intermediary's website. Any affected person may report the misuse of social networking sites to the intermediary hosting these social networking sites and request for removal/disabling of wrongful facts or objectionable content. The intermediary is required to act within thirty six hours of receiving such request, and where applicable, work with user or owner of such information to disable such information that is in contravention of sub-rule 3(2). The intermediary is also required to designate a grievance officer to redress such requests by the affected person.