

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:284
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015
USE OF INTERNET BY TERRORISTS
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Internet and social networking sites are being used by militant groups and their sympathizers to post propaganda material against India; and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of such incidents which have come into the light over the past three years and the current year with complete details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has any plans to put in place a legal framework to govern unmonitored use of social media;
- (d) whether the Government has any plans to make it mandatory for social networking companies to set up local servers in India to facilitate data access for Indian security agencies;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons thereof?

Answer

MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a): Internet and Social Media have extraordinary reach particularly in the field of information sharing and dissemination and its resultant advantages to the society. However, anti-national groups / elements also make use of Social Networking sites on the Internet to post propaganda and anti-national information and for mentoring Indian youths to join such activities. Many of such websites do not require any authentication for posting information, videos or for downloading the contents thus helping to hide the identities. The objectionable information were appearing and disappearing regularly and dynamically.

(b): A total number of 362, 432 and 272 incidents relating to posting propaganda material Anti-national contents/ sentiments on Internet including Social Media sites were reported by Law Enforcement and Security agencies during 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively. In 2012, 312 Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) were blocked for access to public in a single instance at the time of exodus of North-east people from different parts of the country. The websites were blocked invoking process of the Government under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act 2000 as well as to comply with the Court orders.

(c): The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011 under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act 2000 requires that the Intermediaries shall observe due diligence while discharging their duties and shall inform the users of Computer resources not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is harmful, objectionable, affect minors and unlawful in any way. Beyond such Rules, there is no framework to govern use of Social Media. At present, Law Enforcement and Intelligence / Security Agencies make searches on the Internet on specific case-to-case basis.

(d),(e) and (f): There is no proposal at present with the Government to make it mandatory for Social Networking companies to set up local servers in India to facilitate data access for Indian Security agencies. However, Government is in regular dialog with intermediaries including social networking sites for effective disablement of such objectionable content. An Advisory was issued on August 17, 2012 under Section 69A and Sub-Section 3(B) under Section 79 of Information Technology Act 2000 and Rules therein to all intermediaries asking them to take necessary action to disable inflammatory and hateful content hosted on their website on priority basis.