

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5824
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2015
BAN ON BULK SMS
Khuba Shri Bhagwanth

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

- (a) whether the Government has banned circulation of bulk SMS, MMS Messages and Whatsapp in the country in the wake of communal violence;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is reviewing the decision;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to regulate the mobile operators issuing mobile connection without proper verification?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (d) Madam, keeping in view the Security scenario at that time, Government directed all the Telecom Service Providers on 17.08.2012 to take following action with immediate effect:

- (i) Block Bulk SMS (more than 5) for next 15 days in the entire country across all states/Union territories.
- (ii) Block bulk MMS (more than 5) and all MMS with attachment more than 25 KB for the next 15 days in the entire country across all states/Union territories.
- (iii) This restriction of SMS/MMS does not apply on the SMS/MMS in respect of transactional messages related to institutions such banking, financial institutes and railways.

Based on review of the situation, Government decided on 23.08.2012 to revise the permissible limit of Bulk SMS/MMS to 'Twenty' in place of 'Five' and finally these restrictions were withdrawn on 30.08.2012.

(e) Telecom Enforcement Resource and Monitoring (TERM) Cells of Department of Telecommunication carry out monthly sample verification of Customer Acquisition Form/ Customer Application Form (CAF)/ Subscriber Acquisition Form (SAF) along with supporting documents to cross check the compliance on photo, identity, address (PIA) basis. Penalty is imposed on respective Telecom Service Provider for the non-compliance cases. Further, Department of Telecommunication has issued new stringent instructions on verification of mobile subscribers vide No. 800-09/2010-VAS dated 09.08.2012 in compliance to the directions contained in the judgment and order dated 27.04.2012 by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.