

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1371
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2016
Regulation of Social Networking Sites
P. Shri Nagarajan

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

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

- (a) whether the social networking sites have been regulated to remove objectionable comments;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether the Government has directed the social media sites like Google, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter etc. to set up servers in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the response of these sites and the number of social networking sites which have already set up their servers in the country so far?

Answer

(a) and (b) : Government has not regulated the content appearing on social networking sites.

The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 has provisions for removal of objectionable online content. The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011 under section 79 of the IT Act 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.

Further, Government takes action under section 69A of IT Act for blocking of websites/webpages with objectionable contents, whenever requests are received from designated nodal officers or upon Court orders. Section 69A of the IT Act empowers Government to block any information generated, transmitted, received, stored or hosted in any computer resource in the interest of i) sovereignty and integrity of India, ii) defence of India, iii) security of the State, iv) friendly relations with foreign States v) public order or vi) for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above.

A total of 1,377 URLs of social media websites/webpages were blocked in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 (upto 30th October 2016) under section 69A through the Committee constituted under the Rules therein. Further, a total of 1,670 URLs of social media websites were blocked in compliance with the directions of the competent Courts of India in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 (upto 30th October 2016).

(c) and (d): No, Sir. Government has not directed the social media sites including Google, WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter to set up servers in the country.

(e): Government does not maintain details of hosting of private websites including social media websites
