

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1816
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 28.12.2018

BLOCKING OF WEBSITES

1816. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

Will the Minister of Electronics & Information Technology be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government has ordered Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to block several websites and web links and URLs;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government has issued any specific guidelines to ISPs to restrict websites and web-links featuring inappropriate content?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA)

(a) to (c): Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) orders Internet Service Providers (ISPs) through Department of Telecommunication (DoT) for blocking of Websites/ URLs under section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000. Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000 empowers Government to block information from public access under specific conditions of:- (i) interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, (ii) defence of India, (iii) security of the State, (iv) friendly relations with foreign States or (v) public order or (vi) for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above. The number of URLs blocked / removed during the year 2017 and 2018 under section 69A through the Committee constituted under the rules therein is 1385 and 2799, respectively. This includes blocking / removal of URLs by social media platforms.

Government orders for blocking specific websites/webpages in compliance with the directions of Courts orders as and when any such orders are received. From January 2016 to date, blocking instructions have been issued by DoT to ISPs for compliance of the court orders for about 8440 URLs / websites.

Government periodically blocks the websites containing extreme Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) based on INTERPOL's "Worst of List" and received through Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). CBI is the national nodal agency for Interpol in India. DoT has instructed ISPs to block the list of 5771 URLs / websites of such content as provided by CBI.

Further, Government has issued an order in April 2017 under the IT Act, 2000 to select ISPs managing gateway traffic in India to disable/remove access to child pornography sites by adopting Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), U.K. list.
