

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2008
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 17.03.2023

BLOCKED ACCOUNTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT UNDER IT ACT

2008: SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE:

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

- (a) details of the number of orders issued to block accounts and other social media content, including YouTube channels, Twitter accounts, etc., under the Information Technology (IT) Act and the Information Technology Rules of 2021, since 2014, including the current year, year-wise;
- (b) details of the total number of such orders which have been placed before and set aside by the Review Committee in accordance with the IT Act;
- (c) whether it is a fact that Government did not publish such orders in the public domain; and
- (d) if so, the reasons for not publishing such orders in the public domain?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI
RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a): The Government policies are aimed at ensuring an Open, Safe & Trusted and Accountable Internet to its citizens and hence blocking directions are issued under section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 and the Information Technology Rules of 2021 to block access of information. The section 69A of IT Act provided power to government to issue directions for blocking if it is necessary or expedient to do so in the interest of sovereignty and integrity, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for inciting cognizable offence relating to above.

The Government follows due process as envisaged in the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information for Public) Rules, 2009. Such directions are issued for blocking a total of 471, 500, 633, 1385, 2799, 3635, 9849, 6118, 6935 and 974 URLs during the year 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023* (*till 10thMarch2023) respectively. These includes social media URLs, accounts, channels, pages, apps, web pages, websites etc.

(b): As per Rule 14 of the aforesaid rules, Review Committee shall meet at least once in two months and records its findings whether the directions issued under these rules are in accordance with the provisions of section 69A of the IT Act. So far, Review Committee has not set aside any order issued under section 69A of the IT Act, 2000.

(c) and (d): Yes. As per Rule 16 of the aforesaid rules, strict confidentiality shall be maintained regarding all the requests and complaints received and actions taken thereof.
