

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.224**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 18.07.2018

**CHECK ON CIRCULATION OF FAKE NEWS**

**224. SHRIMATI DARSHANA, VIKRAM JARDOSH:  
SHRI SHIVKUMAR UDASI:**

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

- (a) whether the social media is being used to spread rumours, fake news and defame public personalities and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether there are reports of the social media being used to disturb peace and spread terror propaganda and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to address the said problem and to have an effective monitoring of social media; and
- (d) whether the Government plans to regulate social media and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) and (b): Social media has emerged as a popular online medium/ platform to enable users to share ideas and express views/opinions on specific topics. These platforms can be accessed by all sections of society and this is facilitated by the virtual and borderless nature of cyber space, where anyone can open account in any name including fake name from any part of the world, thus leading to misuse by some persons.

(c) and (d): The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 has provisions for removal of objectionable online content. The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules notified 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 grossly harmful, defamatory, hateful, libellous, objectionable, affect minors and unlawful in any way.

Further, 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.

Government is fully committed to freedom of speech and expression and privacy of its citizens as enshrined in the constitution of India. Government does not regulate content appearing on social media sites, and law enforcement and security agencies may take action on specific case-to-case basis as per law in force.

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