

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1433
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 19.12.2018

MISUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

1433. SHRI RAJESH PANDEY
SHRI NISHIKANT DUBEY:

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

- (a) whether the misuse of social media is on rise in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to curb the misuse of social media?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): Cyberspace has distinct and unique characteristics as compared to physical space. With widespread proliferation of new technologies like social media, there are some miscreants who are misusing these technologies to hurt religious sentiments and create communal disharmony in the society. Such behavior is facilitated by 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 misuse of social media is on rise in the country as elsewhere in the world.

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.
