

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY)

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2879

TO BE ANSWERED ON: 16.12.2015

ANTI RELIGIOUS POSTS

2879

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY:

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

- (a) whether the Government flagged posts on Social Media websites on the grounds of being "anti-religion";
- (b) if so, the details on the number of posts removed during the period of 2012—15, year-wise; and
- (c) the details of actions taken against those who posted them and under which act?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) and (b): Government takes action under Section 69A of Information Technology (IT) Act 2000 for blocking of websites/ Specific Web pages with objectionable contents, whenever requests are received from designated nodal officers or upon Court orders for blocking of websites/ Web pages. Section 69A of the Information Technology Act 2000 empowers Government to block any information generated, transmitted, received, stored or hosted in any Computer Resource in the interest of Sovereignty and Integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above.

There is no institutional monitoring mechanism for monitoring social networking sites. At present, Law Enforcement and Security Agencies make searches on the Internet on specific case-to-case basis. Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) within the National Media Centre in Ministry of Information and Broadcasting tracks current trends on social media and monitors Public Interface on the social media network.

A total of 136, 13 and 10 and 492 URLs of social media websites were blocked in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 (till 30th Nov 2015) respectively under Section 69A through the Committee constituted under the rules therein. Further, a total of 533, 432 and 352 URLs of social media websites were blocked in compliance with the directions of the competent Courts of India in 2013, 2014 and 2015 (till 30th November 2015) respectively. Besides, Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) gets requests for blocking of objectionable content from individuals and organisations, which merely forwards those requests to the concerned websites for appropriate action.

(c): The cyberspace is virtual, borderless and anonymous. Any one can open account in any name including fake name from any part of the world. Any user with any email address is allowed to register with social networking sites with any name including fake name. No background information check is performed by the social networking sites, which leads to creation of fake account by miscreants for committing crimes. Most of the networking sites and their servers are located abroad. In most of the cases, such fake accounts were successfully disabled in association with social networking sites, having offices in India. However, success rate is low in disabling accounts and getting information from social networking sites having offices abroad.

Also, as per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 4,192 cases were reported under section 66A of the IT Act 2000 (under the offences of sending offensive messages through communication services etc.) during 2014. State/UT wise cases registered, cases charge-sheeted, cases convicted, persons arrested, persons charge-sheeted and persons convicted under section 66A of the IT Act (under the offences of sending offensive messages through communication services etc.) during 2014 is enclosed at Annexure. The latest data pertains to the year 2014 only, as section 66A is no longer valid since Hon'ble Supreme Court of India order in Shreya Singhal Vs Union of India on 24th March 2015.

In all the above cases, data with regard to requests on the ground being "Anti-Religion" is not maintained separately.

Annexure

State/UT wise cases registered (CR), cases charge sheeted (CS), cases convicted (CV), persons arrested (PAR), persons charge sheeted (PCS) and persons convicted (PCV) under section 66A of the Information Technology Act (Punishment for sending offensive messages through communication services, etc.) during 2014

Code	State/UT	2014					
		CR	CS	CV	PAR	PCS	PCV
1	Andhra Pradesh	89	30	0	63	31	0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	5	0	0	1	0	0
3	Assam	377	22	1	349	22	1
4	Bihar	111	13	1	105	14	1
5	Chhattisgarh	66	35	0	58	52	0
6	Goa	29	1	0	1	2	0
7	Gujarat	43	17	0	48	29	0
8	Haryana	76	20	3	40	30	4
9	Himachal Pradesh	16	7	0	6	14	0
10	Jammu & Kashmir	6	1	0	1	1	0
11	Jharkhand	21	7	0	15	8	0
12	Karnataka	603	47	0	175	64	0
13	Kerala	229	105	6	160	128	6
14	Madhya Pradesh	49	62	1	76	71	2
15	Maharashtra	375	99	1	182	130	1
16	Manipur	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	Meghalaya	5	3	0	4	4	0
18	Mizoram	15	4	0	4	4	0
19	Nagaland	0	1	0	0	1	0
20	Odisha	30	4	0	4	4	0
21	Punjab	123	35	6	85	39	6
22	Rajasthan	291	75	3	107	107	3
23	Sikkim	4	0	0	2	0	0
24	Tamil Nadu	55	11	2	51	12	4
25	Telangana	352	33	0	132	37	0
26	Tripura	2	0	0	0	0	0
27	Uttar Pradesh	898	137	6	592	210	6
28	Uttarakhand	23	13	0	26	26	0
29	West Bengal	144	32	1	98	34	1
TOTAL STATE(S)		4037	814	31	2385	1074	35

Code	State/UT	2014					
		CR	CS	CV	PAR	PCS	PCV
30	A & N Islands	1	0	0	0	0	0
31	Chandigarh	12	7	2	10	7	2
32	D&N Haveli	3	0	0	1	0	0
33	Daman & Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	Delhi UT	137	39	5	27	44	5
35	Lakshadweep	1	0	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	1	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL UT(S)		155	46	7	38	51	7
TOTAL (ALL INDIA)		4192	860	38	2423	1125	42

Source: Crime in India

Disposal of cases/persons by police/courts may include cases/persons of previous years also.
