

Blocking websites having derogatory remarks and sensitive contents

2505. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite various Court Orders, Government is finding it difficult to block certain websites having derogatory remarks and sensitive contents;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of Government thereto;

(c) the mechanism existing with Government to address such issues;

(d) the effective steps taken / being taken by Government to correct the situation;

(e) whether Government is planning to take action against the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) for their technological shortcomings in failing to block such websites;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by Government to include needful clauses in operational licensing agreements of these ISPs?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Instructions for blocking of websites / URLs by Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are issued by Department of Electronics and Information Technology to Department of Telecommunications as per the direction of various Court Orders. Compliances are also received from all the major ISPs. However, difficulties have been reported by ISPs to block the websites when the parameters relating to identification of such websites is encrypted with “https” / secured pages. Further, there are constraints of resources in terms of capacity of the infrastructure deployed by the Internet Service Providers.

(c) and (d) The Government is in regular touch with Internet Service Providers to address the difficulties. ISPs are in the process of upgrading their infrastructure and technology to effectively address the shortcomings with regard to identifying and blocking encrypted websites / URLs. Further, Government is in regular touch with Social Networking sites, having their offices in India, to block objectionable contents at the source in their websites. Government has also initiated Research and Development programmes to identify encrypted communication in order to block such objectionable communication.

(e) and (f) As per Section 79 of the Information Technology Act 2000, Intermediaries including ISPs are not liable for any third party information, data or communication link made available by them if they observe due diligence.

(g) The license Agreement with ISPs are amended from time to time in public interest, in the interest of the security of the state or for the proper conduct of Telecommunications.