

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 250
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 21.07.2023

COVERAGE OF FARMERS' AGITATION BY TWITTER

250. SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY:

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

- (a) whether Government authorities had shut down the services of Twitter and raid homes of executives of Twitter for their coverage of farmers' agitation during 2021, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the number of requests made by Government from August 2020 to December 2021 to Twitter to remove such content and the number of requests for user account data; and
- (c) whether these requests were complied with along with the number of requests accepted or rejected by Twitter?

ANSWER

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

(a): No, Sir.

(b): The policies of the Government are aimed at ensuring an Open, Safe and Trusted and Accountable Internet for its users across the country. Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 provides power to the Government to issue directions to block any information 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. Directions for blocking under section 69A are issued to block 3750 Twitter URLs during August 2020 to December 2021. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology neither make any request for user account data from any platform nor it maintain such data.

(c): Out of aforesaid 3750 URLs, Twitter did not comply with 167 URLs. Therefore, Government issued notice to Twitter on 27th June 2022 giving them opportunity to comply fully, failing which they have to face significant consequences as mentioned in the IT Act, 2000. Subsequent to this notice, Twitter complied with all the blocking directions issued under section 69A of IT Act, 2000.
