NEW NORMS TO MAKE SOCIAL MEDIA MORE ACCOUNTABLE

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The government on Thursday said that it was working on rules to mandate social media companies to identify and remove child sexual abuse material, rape images and content promoting terrorism without affecting privacy.

Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told the Rajya Sabha that the government has invited public comments on its draft of amendments to the Intermediary Rules 2011 and has received public inputs on the same.

"The amendments inter alia propose that intermediaries should proactively identify and remove child sexual abuse material, rape/gang-rape imagery and contents promoting terrorism without compromising accuracy or privacy using technology-based tools and mechanism. The rules are presently being finalised," Mr. Prasad said.

He said the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000, has adequate provisions for removal of objectionable online content.

"Social media platforms are intermediaries as defined in the Act," the minister said.

He said Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000, empowers the 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 cognisable offence relating to above.

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