

# GOVERNMENT WILL REGULATE AI IF IT BRINGS HARM TO USERS, SAYS UNION MINISTER

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Union Minister of State for Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar addresses a press conference, at the BJP Headquarters, in New Delhi on Friday. | Photo Credit: ANI

Any regulation of [artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#) in India would be done through the “prism of user harm”, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Friday. He expressed scepticism about AI applications in their current form replacing jobs at a significant level.

“We will not let platforms that cause harm to digital *nagriks* (citizens) to operate in India. If they do operate, they will have to mitigate those harms,” Mr. Chandrasekhar said at a press conference at the BJP headquarters.

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Allaying concerns over job loss due to the rise of AI, the Minister said, “I can assure you that while AI is disruptive, we do not see in the next few years the so-called threat of it replacing jobs or removing jobs.”

“AI is very task-oriented, not reasoning, logic-oriented. AI is not that sophisticated at this stage,” he said.

[OpenAI CEO Sam Altman visited India this week and spoke about AI regulation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#), a subject that the technology executive has brought up to other heads of state and elected representatives in the U.S.

The Minister blamed the Congress-led UPA for giving a free pass to big tech companies by introducing the ‘safe harbour’ clause into the IT Act in 2008. Safe harbour refers to the legal immunity a platform holds for content posted by its users.

“In a way, the growth of toxicity, illegality, criminality, and user harm has been unfettered,” he said, adding that the government would soon pass a new data protection Bill.

The Minister said the government was working on the Digital India Bill, touted as a modern

replacement of the Information Technology Act, 2000, and [the draft Bill was on track to be released in June.](#)

Mr. Chandrasekhar had earlier said that the government was looking at getting rid of the safe harbour clause in the the new law.

He indicated that total online anonymity for Internet users was a tricky terrain. “Anonymous users may share misinformation or [hate] inciting content,” Mr. Chandrasekhar said. Law enforcement agencies “and prosecution have a problem there. This is a debatable issue where we are dealing sensitively.”

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