

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.489
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6TH FEBRUARY, 2019**

PARTIAL SHUTDOWN OF INTERNET

489. SHRI A.P. JITHENDER REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of partial shutdowns in the country in the past five years, where the speed of connectivity was reduced;
- (b) the details of the economic losses incurred due to such partial shutdowns; and
- (c) the number of website blockings in the past five years and the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)**

(a) Central Government has not issued any order of internet shutdown under the provisions of Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017.

Police and public order are State subjects as per the Constitution and States are responsible for prevention, detection and investigation of crimes through their law enforcement machinery. Concerned State Governments are empowered to issue orders for temporary suspension of internet services to maintain law and order in the State or part thereof under the provisions contained in the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017. Records related to internet shutdowns ordered by State Governments are not maintained by Department of Telecommunications (DoT).

(b) DoT does not assess the economic losses incurred, if any, due to such partial shutdowns. DoT had received a joint representation dated 08.08.2018 from telecom service providers, wherein it was intimated that frequent suspension of internet services were being ordered by State Governments. Accordingly, on 28.09.2018, all State Governments have been advised to sensitize the concerned officials/agencies against precipitate actions leading to shut down of Internet services, and to ensure that the provisions of "Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017" are adhered to.

(c) As per Information Technology Act, 2000 [Section 69A] and Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public Rules 2009 made thereunder, the directions for blocking of website for access by public are issued by Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY). As per the directions of MeitY, from 01st January 2016 to date, instructions for blocking of 2354 Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) have been issued by DOT to Internet Service Providers (ISPs). Further, from 01st January 2016 to date, as per the direction of Honorable Courts, instructions for blocking of 8459 URLs/websites have been issued. In addition, DOT has instructed ISPs to block 6631 URLs/websites of online child sexual abuse material as provided by Central Bureau of Investigation.
