

New digital broadcasting and news rules coming soon



Amid the major data analysis and privacy breakdown on national as well as international level, Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani said on Thursday that the ministry will soon roll out new rules for digital broadcasting and news.

They say anything put up online is not completely safe and is vulnerable to attacks, leaks or privacy breaches; the latest example is Cambridge Analytica breakdown. The Britain-based political analytical firm illegally harvest data from Facebook profiles of 50 million users, without their consent - which was later used for political purposes by governments and parties of many countries across the world. As per some whistle-blowers, the clientele list of Cambridge Analytica includes some Indian political parties - jeopardising privacy of billions of Indians and transparency of India as a democratic nation.

Talking about this during addressing press on Thursday, Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani said that the real challenge for the government was to create a "proactive policy which upholds the right to free speech, but at the same time doesn't give anyone the right to instigate a riot. That is where the balance has to be found." Talking lengths about data theft and Indian laws, Irani said that as per Indian Penal Code, there are sanctions for people who try to create differences between classes, castes or communities, deliberately.

However in the case of data theft, parties wanted to analyse the castes of every voter to engineer a communicative strategy to instigate and influence; and there's no law covering such cases. To overcome these judicial glitches and make data privacy more secure, Irani said that it was time India had a policy for digital broadcasting and news, and that she would make some announcement in this regard "very soon". These new rules will aid the existing policies governing broadcast and print media and might also include social media broadcasting rules.