

# Govt mulls 3rd notice to Whatsapp

**KIRAN RATHEE**  
New Delhi, 20 September

With WhatsApp giving no assurance to the government regarding tracing of the origin of fake messages, the Centre is likely to issue another notice to the Facebook-owned company next week.

This will be the third notice to the messaging platform regarding the contentious issue of fake messages. People in the Ministry of Electronics and IT (Meity) with knowledge of the matter said the intent is to keep WhatsApp engaged while asserting its demand that a solution be provided. "We are asking WhatsApp to do it (pro-



**Use of metadata, visited through apps like WhatsApp, can be helpful in tracing unusual activities**

vide the solution) as it will become mandatory once guidelines regarding cyber security are put in place," said a person in the ministry. The government is working on guidelines to make it manda-

tory for companies to have their offices and top executives in India. The guidelines seek to put in place a mechanism wherein firms will be required to share data with security agencies.

The ministry feels WhatsApp has the knowhow to safeguard privacy and at the same time respond to specific cases in which people get killed.

The people added that the government does not seek content of the messages but a solution to trace the unusual spreading of messages. The use of metadata like mobile numbers, handset type, mobile network, time and duration of

chats, data on web pages visited through WhatsApp etc can be helpful in tracing unusual activities.

In fact, the use of metadata and artificial intelligence (AI) has also helped Indian law enforcement agencies to block some accounts in Madhya Pradesh which have been involved in spreading fake messages. The Centre is taking the misuse of social media platforms seriously.

IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had informed Parliament recently that the government would consider amending rules that would require platforms to locate their grievance officers in India.

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For Shyamnagar Contact : Mr. Achinta Mukherjee at: 9831893793  
For Baripada Contact : Mr. Biplab Bugudai at: 9777744959

**Last date for receipt of EOI is 27th September, 2018**

Vinod Kumar Kothari, Liquidator  
NICCO Corporation Limited- In Liquidation  
Nicco House, 2, Hare Street, Kolkata- 700001  
e-mail: [niccoliquidation@gmail.com](mailto:niccoliquidation@gmail.com)  
Registration No.: IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00019/ 2016-17/10033  
Date : 20.09.2018

**CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD.**

Regd. Office: C-3, CONCOR Bhawan, Mathura Road, Opp. Apollo Hospital, New Delhi-110076  
(CIN : L63011DL1988GOI030915)  
Email: [investorrelations@concorindia.com](mailto:investorrelations@concorindia.com), Website: [www.concorindia.com](http://www.concorindia.com),  
Phone: 011-41673093-96, Fax: 011-41673112