

Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2026

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Why in News?

Recently, India has tightened social media rules, requiring platforms to remove unlawful content within 2-3 hours and regulate AI-generated information.

- **Aim** - To curb the rapid virality of unlawful content and ensure accountability of digital platforms.
- **Amendment to** - Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.
- **Objective** - Introduce legal recognition and regulation of synthetically generated information (SGI).
- Streamline compliance timelines for social media platforms' censorship.
- **Key Features** -

Domain	Provisions
SGI Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First formal definition and regulation of SGI in India, targeting deepfakes and AI impersonations while excluding routine edits and academic/training material.
Labelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory labelling of SGI with metadata or unique identifiers. • Removal or suppression of labels is prohibited.
Intermediary Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant social media intermediaries must verify user declarations. • Also ensure clear disclosure of SGI, and take expeditious action, including removal, disabling access, or suspending accounts.
Safe Harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Non-compliance may lead to loss of Safe Harbour protection</u> under Section 79 of the IT Act.
Takedown Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Takedown of unlawful content must be completed within 2-3 hours.</u> • <u>Grievance redressal timelines shortened from 15 days to 7 days.</u>

Prohibited Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platforms must block SGI involving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-consensual intimate imagery within <i>2 hours against the earlier 24 hours.</i> - Other forms of unlawful content within <i>3 hours against the earlier 36 hours.</i>
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- **Concerns** - Tech companies have raised issues regarding the feasibility of rapid takedown, compliance burden, and potential risk of over-censorship.
- **Significance** - Establishes India's first legal framework for AI-generated content.
- Enhances citizen protection from unlawful digital content and strengthens platform accountability.

Reference

[IE | IT Amendment Rules, 2026](#)

