

Pakistan to draw 'red lines' for social media service providers

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Islamabad: The Pakistani government has decided to draw red lines for the social media service providers in the country.

Pak Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan

The move comes as the controversy over the crackdown on online anti-army campaigners heats up in Pakistan.

“There will be no restrictions on social media, but there will be red lines in accordance with the law and Constitution of the country,” Dawn online quoted Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan as saying on Tuesday.

The announcement came after Khan’s meeting with a delegation of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS), the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) and the Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA).

The minister said nothing illegal was being done and advised critics not to create hurdles or hurl threats.

He said the country’s social, moral and cultural values and law and dignity of the people were under attack. “Those attacking our values will be brought to book.”

Referring to the posts on social media following the withdrawal of an ISPR tweet rejecting Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s directive for forming a probe committee regarding a Dawn report, the minister said such posts were unacceptable, particularly at a time when a “war against terror is being waged” to secure the country’s future.

Khan said action would be taken against individuals belonging to any political party or group, including the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-N, if they were found to be behind the malignant campaign.

The minister said he would ask the National Assembly Speaker to convene a meeting of political parties to seek their views on the proposed standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the social media service providers.

He said systems of different countries were being examined to follow the best practice with respect to the code of conduct and SOPs for the service providers.

He said the government supported freedom of expression but it was not at all applicable to those attacking values, decency and the law.

- (With IANS inputs)