

Drop cases filed under Section 66A: Centre

Advisory follows SC remarks

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The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday asked the States and the Union Territories to withdraw immediately the cases registered under the repealed Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, days after the Supreme Court expressed shock that it was being invoked even six years after it struck down the legislation.

Court view

The Supreme Court found it “distressing”, “shocking” and “terrible” that the provision was still being used to book people, **though the court held it as unconstitutional and a violation of free speech in the Shreya Singhal judgment authored by Jus-**

tice Rohinton F. Nariman on March 24, 2015.

Through an advisory, the Ministry asked the authorities in the States and the Union Territories to direct all police stations not to register cases under the repealed provision.

“If any case has been booked in your State under Section 66A of the IT Act, 2000, it should immediately be withdrawn,” the advisory said.

The Electronics and Information Technology Ministry, through a letter in January 2019, and the Home Ministry, in two letters in January and April 2019, asked them to sensitise the police departments and the local police authorities for strict compliance with the court directive.