



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalaivar Kamarajar"

SC Directions on Online Content Regulation

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The Supreme Court directed the Centre to develop effective guidelines to regulate abusive, obscene, and harmful user-generated content on digital platforms.

Key Observations and Directives

- **Independent Regulator:** The Court found existing 'self-regulation mechanisms inadequate and stressed the need for a neutral, autonomous authority to oversee online content.
- **Preventive Mechanisms:** Current systems act only after viral content causes psychological and reputational harm, highlighting the need for tools that prevent initial spread.
- **Free Speech Limits:** The Court reaffirmed the protection of Article 19(1)(a) but noted that reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2) must uphold decency, morality, and public order.
- **Ambiguous Definitions:** Broad and vague terms like "anti-national attitudes" can be misused unless precisely defined using judicially tested standards.
- **Age Verification:** The bench suggested using Aadhaar-based or similar strong age-verification models since simple disclaimers don't prevent access to harmful content.
- **PwD Protection:** It called for enacting a strict law penalising the ridicule of persons with disabilities, similar in approach to the SC/ST (Prevention of atrocities) Act