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Govt. proposes mandatory labelling of AI-generated content on social media

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The Electronics and Information Technology Ministry on Wednesday proposed mandatory disclosure and labelling of artificial intelligence (AI)-generated "synthetic" content on social media platforms.

The Ministry released a draft amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, that requires social media companies to allow users to self-declare if the content they upload is AI-generated. In cases where users fail to make such declarations, platforms must proactively detect and label AI-generated content.

The declaration must cover 10% of the content's area, and applies to all types of synthetic content, including text, video, and audio, and is not limited to photorealistic content, according to officials and the draft text.

"In Parliament as well as many other fora, people have demanded that something should be done about the deepfakes which are harming society," IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told presspersons.

"People are using some prominent persons' image and creating deepfakes, which are then affecting their personal lives, privacy as well as [creating] various misconceptions in society. So the step we have taken is making sure that users get to know whether something is synthetic or real. Once users know, they can take a call. But it's important that users know what is real. That distinction will be led through mandatory data labelling."

The proposal marks a shift in the Ministry's approach to synthetic content.

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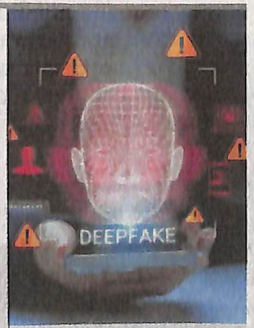
Disclosure mandate

The draft amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, outlines the Ministry's proposed approach to **regulating synthetic content**

- All synthetic content — whether video, photo, audio, or text — must **carry a disclosure**
- The disclosure should cover **at least 10% of the surface area** in all AI-generated audiovisual posts
- Users must be given the **option to self-declare** AI-generated posts



Govt. proposes rules for labelling AI content

The Ministry had previously contended that existing penalties against impersonation were sufficient to address the worst harms from AI-generated content. The proposal brings a long-foreshadowed "tweak" to that stand, a senior official said.

The draft defines synthetically generated information as "information which is artificially or algorithmically created, generated, modified or altered using a computer resource, in a manner that such information reasonably appears to be authentic or true".

The Ministry has sought feedback on the draft amendment to the IT Rules till November 6. Officials claimed that in private conversations, social media platforms had indicated that they had the technical capabilities to implement what these rules require.