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## India Is Not A Surveillance State: SC

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The Supreme Court has stated that government monitoring of every social media message can make the country a surveillance state. The statement was made with reference to the Central government's proposal to create a hub- **Social Media Communication Hub** (SMCH), under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to track social media trends.

- The government had claimed that the hub was to track views on various programmes and understand popular perception on schemes.
- Concerns were raised that the proposed SMCH would become a tool in the hands of a private agency to help the government launch surveillance on citizens' activities on social media platforms in violation of the right to privacy which is part of right to life, guaranteed under **Article 21 of the constitution**.
- The project envisages employment of media persons on contractual basis in each district to be the "eyes and ears" of the government and provide real-time updates from the ground which in turn can be misused by the government. This will be in contravention of **Article 19 (1)(a)** which guarantees freedom of speech and expression.