

Control social media to stop radicalisation: Gen Rawat

No country immune, zero tolerance towards terrorism need of the hour, says Sushma Swaraj at Raisina Dialogue

ENS & PTI

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 9

TERRORISM IS becoming a new form of warfare and it will keep growing like a “multi-headed monster” so long as nations continue to use it as a state policy, Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat said on Wednesday while pitching for some control over social media to contain spread of radicalisation and terror-funding.

Speaking at the Raisina Dialogue, the Army Chief said radicalisation through social media is also becoming one of the causes for raising of funds by terrorist organisations.

Speaking at the same event, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj pointed out that no country is immune from the “existential threat” of terrorism, and that ensuring zero tolerance towards terrorism and



External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj during the 4th Raisina Dialogue, in New Delhi. PTI

those who use it as an instrument of convenience is the “need of the hour”.

Swaraj said, “...there was a

time when India would talk about terrorism, and it would be treated as a law and order issue on many global platforms. Today

no country is immune from this existential threat, particularly terrorism actively supported and sponsored by states. In this digi-

tal age, the challenge is even greater, with a greater vulnerability to radicalisation.”

In a clear reference to Pakistan, Gen Rawat said a “weaker nation” has been using terrorists as a proxy to put pressure on other nations to come to terms with them, and warned against tolerating such policy.

Identifying social media as a platform to spread radicalism and generate financial resources for terrorism, he said time has come to put some control over it. “We see a different kind of radicalisation in Jammu and Kashmir. My take is that terrorism is here to stay so long as there are nations which are going to continue to sponsor terrorism as a state policy. We are seeing it happening in J&K,” he said.

In J&K, Gen Rawat said, the youth are being radicalised using “misinformation” and false-

hoods on religion.

“It is a low-visibility, high-gain option. This is now becoming a form of warfare. We referred to guerrilla warfare some years ago. This is now graduated to terrorism,” he said.

Gen Rawat said radicalisation through social media is a matter of great concern as a lot of people are getting radicalised this way.

He said: “I think we have a lot to do with the media and social media, which must be controlled. For this, if one particular nation starts controlling a particular media, it will be taken as media rights are being curbed. Therefore, I think the international community must get together in ensuring that the source of social media is prevented from spreading false information and disinformation because a lot of funds are coming from people who are getting radicalised.”