

Twitter's new anti-doxxing policy

December 21, 2022

In news– Twitter has suspended the account of several journalists in the United States, and according to its owner, this was in continuation of the social media **platform's new anti-doxxing policy.**

What is doxxing?

- Doxxing is basically the **revealing of someone's intimate information, where harassment is the intent.**
- It is a popular and **controversial tactic used against those with opposing political views** and sometimes even celebrities and influencers have been doxxed with real-life consequences.
- In many cases, harassers have used this private information to send SWAT teams or armed police to the homes of many of the victims.
- This private information includes one's address, phone number, financial information, etc. But some have argued that journalistic reports – especially on those running popular but anonymous accounts on social media – are examples of doxxing as well, which is not the case.
- Doxxing sprang from 1990s online hacker culture, which prized anonymity. It was a way for hackers to unmask rivals they were feuding with. But that aspect became less relevant as doxxing's definition expanded and many more people moved online using their real names on their social media accounts.
- Celebrities, politicians, journalists have all been victims of doxing. So have people with lower profiles.

Twitter's policy-

Twitter's policy **now includes sharing the live location** of any individual as a possible "serious safety and security risk,"

and this **is not allowed**. The older version of the policy did not mention the live location aspect.

As per new policy, users may not publish other people's private information without "their express authorization and permission, and threatening to expose such information is also prohibited."

The policy goes on to describe revealing what information would be considered doxxing. This includes:

- Home address or physical location information, including street addresses, GPS coordinates or other identifying information related to locations that are considered private.
- Live location information, including information shared on Twitter directly or links to 3rd-party URL(s) of travel routes, actual physical location, or other identifying information that would reveal a person's location, regardless if this information is publicly available.
- Twitter defines "live" as real-time and/or same-day information where there is potential that the individual could still be at the named location.
- Identity documents, including government-issued IDs and social security or other national identity numbers.
- Contact information, including non-public personal phone numbers or email addresses.
- Financial account information, including bank account and credit card details.
- Other private information, including biometric data or medical records.
- Media of private individuals without the permission of the person(s) depicted.
- According to the policy, violation of these can result in the account getting locked and continued violations can result in a permanent suspension. But sharing anyone's live location without express permission will

lead to an automatic suspension.