

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.741**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 22.07.2022

**ACCESSIBILITY OF BANNED APPS**

**741. SHRI V VIJAYASAI REDDY**

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether banned Apps are appearing in a new avatar by using similar sounding names or rebranded with the same functionality and managing to circumvent scrutiny.
- (b) Whether PUBG has also come back and some children have also committed crimes when they were restrained from playing the game.
- (c) Whether instead of downloading from Google Play Store, people are downloading banned Apps/similar Apps with new names through APK files, which provides an alternative platform to download Apps; and
- (d) If so, the efforts being made by the Ministry to ban such Apps and take action against those companies promoting such Apps?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a): There are various reports and grievances received in Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), conveying that apps that were blocked are appearing with new avatar by using similar sounding names or rebranded with the same functionality. All such reports and grievances have been forwarded to Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the requesting agency, for examination. MeitY follows the due process as defined in the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009.

(b): There was a media report that a child has killed his mother based on PUBG that he has been playing. This is a matter of investigation by LEAs to find the reason. But, the PUBG gaming app was blocked by MeitY in the year 2020 and the PUBG game is not available in India since then.

(c) and (d): MeitY has issued blocking directions to many 3<sup>rd</sup> party app stores including Google Play Store and Apple Store to block the apps under section 69A of the IT Act 2000. Further, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) were also served with blocking directions through Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to block related domains and IPs through which the blocked apps were communicating.

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