

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION. NO. 5599
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 06.04.2022

LOCAL GAMING INDUSTRY

5599. SHRI SURESH KUMAR KASHYAP:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is planning to make India a hub of online gaming industry though swadeshi tech and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has created any policy document in this regard and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the steps taken by the Government to make India a hub of indigenous game developers and gaming entities;
- (d) whether the Government is planning to create a new policy regime in this regard and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government is considering to promote Indian games instead of imported ones; and
- (f) if so, the details of the steps taken by the Government to protect gaming industry from damage due to banning of games of skills by certain States?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): Online gaming represents a significantly fast expanding component of tech and innovation ecosystem. Government is fully committed to support technology and innovation Start-up ecosystem and its policies have resulted in India being one of the world's most vibrant start-up nations and India is today home to about 70000 start-ups, of which, 93 have turned unicorns. It is estimated that there are around 1000 gaming start-ups are in India and many of them are attracting investments as also creating value. Government is committed to continue supporting Start up and innovation. The Indian Gaming Industry is estimated to generate \$1.5 billion in revenue which is expected to grow to \$5 billion by the year 2025.

In online gaming sector with an objective to support start ups, MeitY through STPI has set up IMAGE, a Centre of Excellence focused on Gaming, VFX, Computer Vision & AI, at Hyderabad in collaboration with industry, academia, and Government of Telangana. The CoE supports product development and innovative solutions in the fields of "Gaming, VFX, and Computer Vision & AI" and provides access to the required infrastructure and labs to startups for development and validation of solution, from design to prototyping. As on April 4, 2022, this CoE has selected 35 startups, out of which, 20 start-ups have been onboarded and supported.

(d): Online gaming platforms are intermediaries, and they have to follow the due diligence as prescribed in the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 and the Rules there under.

State Governments under List II of the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution have enacted their laws to deal with betting and gambling within their jurisdictions. some States have recently legislated for online gaming also.

MeitY regulates all the intermediaries as per the IT Act and the Rules therein and does not have any role in the sanction or licensing of online gaming platforms currently.

The NITI Aayog has published a discussion paper on 'Guiding principles for the uniform national-level regulation of online fantasy sports platforms in India.

In the Union Budget 2022, Government has announced setting up of the taskforce for promotion of Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comic sector (AVGC). This taskforce will recommend ways to employ youth and build domestic capacity for serving both the Indian market as also global demand. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has also announced setting up of an AVGC CoE with an objective to promote gamification and animation.

(e): Under AatmaNirbhar Bharat, the Government of India promotes make-in-india, design-in-India, make-for-India, and make-for-the world. This is also valid for design-in-India safe & secure online games. MeitY in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission - NITI Aayog organised Digital India AatmaNirbhar Bharat App Innovation Challenge to identify the best Indian Apps that are already being used by citizens and have the potential to scale and become world class Apps in their respective categories. This Innovation Challenge with various cash awards and incentives of featuring Apps on Leader Boards sought to create an ecosystem where Indian entrepreneurs and Startups are incentivised to ideate, incubate, build, nurture and sustain Tech solutions that can serve not only citizens within India but also the world. The challenge was organised in 8 broad categories and out of this, one category was 'Games'.

(f): As mentioned in above point (a), (b), (c) & (d), Online Gaming is a State Subject. Several States have their own policies related to online games and the Acts have been enacted by some States (e.g. Sikkim Online Gaming (Regulation) Act, Meghalaya Regulation of Gaming Act, Nagaland Prohibition of Gambling and Promotion and Regulation of Online Games of Skills Act etc). States are within their jurisdiction to enact such laws, rules, and regulations.
