

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2305
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.03.2022

GAMBLING IN ONLINE GAMES

2305. SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that many youngsters are committing suicide, after losing money, due to gambling in online games;
- (b) if so, whether the Government would bring a model legislation to ban online games in the country, especially when some States have already taken the initiative;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether steps would also be taken by the Government to ban advertisements promoting online games in TV and social media;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the details of the efforts made to discourage youths from becoming addicted to online games resulting in loss of money and productivity?

ANSWER

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

(a): The rapid expansion of Internet in India has also seen many different types of intermediaries and other online service providers in both the existing and the newly emerging categories. Online gaming and online gambling are the new emerging categories of online services that are also rapidly expanding all around the world.

Government is aware of the possible risks and challenges including that of user harms associated with online games and gambling. This Ministry has received grievances regarding ill-effects of online games and gambling. Keeping with the MeitY's objective and goals to ensure an Open, Safe & Trusted and Accountable Internet, Government has notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) under the IT Act, 2000.

(b) and (c): 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 thereunder. MeitY regulates all the intermediaries as per the IT Act and the Rules therein and does not have any role in the banning of online gaming platforms currently.

All forms of gambling and betting come under the purview of State Governments and they have enacted their laws to deal with the same within their jurisdictions under List-II of the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Some States have recently legislated for online gambling also.

MeitY also blocks access to information including websites and apps as and when requests are received from designated Nodal Officers of the Ministries/States on specified grounds of section 69A of the IT Act and in blocking some for those attracting 69A and following the due process specified in the Information Technology

(Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009, notified under section 69A.

(d) and (e): The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has issued an advisory to all private satellite TV channels on ‘Advertisements on Online Games, Fantasy Sports, etc.’. According to the advisory, “*all broadcasters are advised that the Guidelines issued by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) are complied with and the advertisements broadcast on television will adhere to the aforementioned Guidelines of ASCI.*” The ASCI guidelines are available at <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/Advisory.pdf>.
