

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1050
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 8.2.2023

INCOME OF ONLINE GAMING SITES

1050. SHRIMATI RAKSHA NIKHIL KHADSE:

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to conduct a survey to study the amount of money, the people of the country investing daily in illegal places through online gaming and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether these acts amount to clear cheating by attracting the audience to the online gaming sites through placing attractive advertisements on various online portals and if so, the details of the steps being taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) the number of such online gaming sites operating in the country and whether any mandatory registration is required for these gaming sites;
- (d) whether the Government is aware about the daily turnover of those companies on such gaming sites; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the revenue earned by means of tax collection from such sites?

ANSWER

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

(a): No such survey is under consideration of the Central Government.

(b): The policies of the Government are aimed at ensuring an Open, Safe and Trusted and Accountable Internet for its users. With the expansion of the Internet and more and more Indians coming online, the potential for Indians being exposed to illegal applications including betting, has also increased.

To help achieve the aim of making Internet Open, Safe and Trusted and Accountable, the Central Government, in exercise of powers conferred by the Information Technology Act, 2000, has made the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. These rules cast specific obligation on intermediaries, including intermediaries offering online games, to observe diligence and provides that if they fail to observe such diligence, they shall no longer be exempt from their liability under law for third-party information or data or communication link hosted by them. Such diligence includes the following:

- (i) To make reasonable efforts to cause its user not to host, display, publish, transmit or share any information that causes incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence, or encourages gambling, or violates any law for the time being in force;
- (ii) To not host, store or publish unlawful information prohibited under law for the time being in force, on a voluntary basis on violation of the above, and on actual knowledge upon receipt of a grievance or court order or notice from the appropriate government or its agency;
- (iii) To have in place a grievance redressal machinery, and resolve complaints of violation of the rules within 72 hours of being reported;

- (iv) To provide, upon receipt of an order from a lawfully authorised government agency, information or assistance for prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution under law.

In the context of rapid growth in online games, its significant contribution in the growth of the digital economy and lack of appropriate regulatory framework for online gaming space, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has prepared draft amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 and has initiated public consultation on the same on 2.1.2023.

To address concerns related to advertising, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has issued an advisory, advising the print and electronic media to refrain from publishing advertisements of online betting platforms, and online and social media, including online advertisement intermediaries and publishers, not to display such advertisements in India or target such advertisements towards Indian audience. The Ministry has also issued an advisory to all private satellite television channels on 'Advertisements on Online Games, Fantasy Sports, etc.', advising all broadcasters that the guidelines issued by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) be complied with and that the advertisements broadcast on television adhere to the same.

(c) to (e): Information in this regard is not maintained with the Government.
