

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3900
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 04.04.2025

PLANTOPROTECTCHILDRENFROMONLINEGAMINGADDICTION

3900.#SMT.GEETAALIASCHANDRAPRABHA:

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

- (a) whether Government is receiving complaints regarding children getting addicted to online gaming in the country;
- (b) whether Government has made any plan to protect children from getting addicted to online gaming and to control online gaming in the country;
- (c) if so, whether Government plan to consider fixing of time limit for online gaming; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) to (d): “Betting and gambling” is a State subject under entry 34 of the List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution and State legislations define betting and gambling related offences. Therefore, as per the provisions of article 246 read with article 162 of the Constitution, State Legislatures have power to legislate on matters related to betting and gambling.

Further, ‘Police’ and ‘Public Order’ are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. The States/UTs are primarily responsible for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes including for action on illegal betting and gambling through their Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs).

The policies of the Central Government are aimed at ensuring an open, safe, trusted and accountable Internet for its users. To help achieve this aim, the Central Government has taken suitable steps to counter the risks posed by online gaming, betting & gambling operations and the associated harms like addiction.

The Central Government after extensive consultations with relevant stakeholders notified amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (“IT Rules, 2021”) under the Information Technology Act, 2000 (“IT Act”) to address various socio-economic concerns emanating from online games.

The IT Rules, 2021 casts specific obligations on intermediaries, including social media intermediaries and online gaming intermediaries. The intermediaries are required not to host, store or publish any information violative of any law for the time being in force. They are also obligated to ensure their accountability that includes their expeditious action towards removal of the unlawful information categorised under the IT Rules, 2021 against the Government's order or on the basis of grievances received against any unlawful information. Such unlawful information comprises any information that, among other things, is harmful to child or that is relating or encouraging money laundering or gambling, or that is promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion or caste with the intent to incite violence, or that is misinformation, patently false information, untrue or misleading in nature, or that threatens the unity, integrity, defence, security or sovereignty of India, public order, or that violates any law for the time being in force.

With regard to addiction to online games, the Ministry of Education has issued advisories for parents & teachers on "Overcoming online gaming downsides" and "Children's safe online gaming".

In addition, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting ("MIB") has issued 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. The guidelines includes that no gaming advertisement may depict any person under the age of 18 years, or who appears to be under the age of 18, engaged in playing game of online gaming for real money winnings, or suggest that such persons can play these games, and that every gaming advertisement must carry the disclaimer in line with ASCI code in print/static media as well as audio/video forms indicating that this game involves an element of financial risk and may be addictive. MIB has also issued advisories prohibiting advertisements (including surrogate) of betting and gambling platforms.

Government has introduced GST at the rate of 28% in online gaming from 1st October, 2023. The supplier of online money gaming shall obtain a single registration under the Simplified Registration Scheme referred to in the Integrated Good and Services Tax Act, 2017 ("IGST Act").

The suppliers of offshore online money gaming are also being regulated under the IGST Act.

The Directorate General of GST Intelligence Headquarters ("DGGI") is empowered as appropriate government/agency under the IT Act and the IGST Act to direct intermediaries to block unregistered offshore online money gaming platforms violating the IGST Act.

Further, the IT Act has provisions to issue blocking orders to intermediaries for blocking access to specific information/ link in the interest of sovereignty and integrity, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing to the incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above following the due process as envisaged in the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information for Public) Rules, 2009.

MeitY has issued 1410 blocking directions related to online betting/gambling/gaming websites (including mobile applications) between the year 2022- 25 (till February, 2025).

DGGI is also investigating offshore entities involved in the supply of online money gaming/betting/gambling. So far, 357 websites/URLs of illegal/non-compliant offshore online money gaming entities have been blocked by the DGGI, in coordination with MeitY, under the IT Act. In two other separate cases, DGGI has collectively blocked nearly 2,400 bank accounts and frozen nearly Rs. 126 crore. DGGI advised public to remain cautious and not engage with offshore online money gaming platforms.

Section 112 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (“BNS”) which came into effect from July 1, 2024, punishes unauthorised betting and gambling with minimum 1 year of imprisonment that may extend to 7 years and with fine.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (“MHA”) has established the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (“I4C”) to provide a framework and eco-system for LEAs to deal with cyber-crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

MHA has also launched the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (<https://cybercrime.gov.in>) to enable the public to report all types of cyber-crimes including cyber financial frauds. Cybercrime incidents reported on this portal are routed to the respective State/UT law enforcement agency for further handling as per the provisions of law. The portal has distinct mechanisms for registering complaints related to financial frauds.

A toll-free Helpline number ‘1930’ has been operationalised to get assistance in lodging online complaints.
