

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1498
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 01.08.2025

FRAMEWORK TO REGULATE ONLINE GAMING

1498. DR. SASMIT PATRA:

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

- (a) whether the Ministry is aware that non-operationalisation of Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023, in relation to online gaming for over two years is resulting in significant harm to consumers and growing concerns over financial addiction, owing to a regulatory vacuum;
- (b) if so, whether the Ministry proposes to designate Self Regulatory Bodies (SRBs) under Rule 4B of the said rules with a view to addressing these concerns, if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Ministry proposes to introduce an alternative regulatory framework to regulate online gaming intermediaries; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The Central Government has taken various steps to counter the risks and harms posed by online gaming. These measures aim to safeguard users from addiction, financial frauds, money laundering and other unlawful activities.

Information Technology Act, 2000 (“IT Act”): Legal and Regulatory Framework

- The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, amended in April 2023 includes specific provisions for regulating online gaming intermediaries.
- Intermediaries, including online gaming intermediaries, must ensure that information that violates any extant law is not hosted, transmitted on the network.
- Online gaming intermediaries offering permissible online real money games are required to register with online gaming self-regulatory bodies (SRBs).
- SRBs are required to verify an online real money game as a permissible online real money game.
- Provisions to issue blocking orders to intermediaries for blocking access to specific information/ link as per Section 69A of IT Act.
- 1,524 blocking directions related to online betting/gambling/gaming websites (including mobile applications) have been issued between the year 2022- 25 (till June, 2025).

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 (“BNS”)

- Section 111 of BNS deals with penalties for commission of unlawful activity including economic offence, cyber-crimes.
- Section 112 of BNS penalises commission of unauthorised betting & gambling with a minimum imprisonment of 1 year, extendable up to 7 years, & has provision of fine.

Integrated Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 (“IGST Act”)

The Central Government has also taken suitable steps to curb the presence of illegal/non-compliant online gaming entities including offshore online money entities operating in violation of the applicable laws relating to taxation.

- Suppliers of online money gaming are regulated under the IGST Act;
- Single registration needed under the Simplified Registration Scheme referred to in the IGST Act;
- Directorate General of GST Intelligence Headquarters is empowered as appropriate government/agency under the IT Act and the IGST Act to direct intermediaries to disable access to unregistered online money gaming platforms including offshore online money gaming platforms violating the IGST Act.

Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (“CPA”)

- Regulates unauthorised trade practices and prohibits any misleading advertisements and their endorsements.
- Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) empowered to redress complaints and issues relating to the same.
- CCPA can investigate, issue appropriate order against unfair trade practices such as misleading advertisements and surrogate advertisements, including penalties, and initiate criminal action.
- CCPA has issued advisories to prevent surrogate & misleading advertisements. Celebrities and influencers have been explicitly warned against endorsing such platforms.

Advisories by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) and Ministry of Education

- Advisories were issued by MIB on 13.06.2022, 03.10.2022, 06.04.2023, 25.08.2023, and 21.04.2024 to print, electronic, digital media, endorsers, influencers, social media platforms, and online advertisement intermediaries. Platforms were asked to refrain from publishing advertisements of online betting platforms that—
 - Are misleading, and
 - Do not appear to be in conformity with the CPA, Advertisement Code under the Cable Television Networks Regulation Act, 1995 and advertisement norms under the Norms of Journalistic Conduct laid down by the Press Council of India.
- Ministry of Education has issued advisories for parents & teachers on “Overcoming online gaming downsides” and “Children's safe online gaming”.

Reporting cyber crimes and online frauds

- All types of cyber-crimes, including cyber frauds, can be reported on National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (<https://cybercrime.gov.in>).
- Incidents reported are then routed to the respective State/UT law enforcement agency for further necessary action.
- Distinct mechanisms in the portal for registering complaints related to financial frauds.
- Toll-free Helpline number “1930” to help in lodging online complaints.

Further, 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India.
