

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3398
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.03.2023

REGULATION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON OTT PLATFORMS.

3398. SHRI RAVIKUMAR D.:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has taken cognizance of the fact that young people are the primary consumers of content on various famous private satellite television channels under Over-The-Top (OTT) Platforms like Amazon Prime, Hulu, Hotstar, Netflix, Sony Liv, Alt Bajaj, MX Player, Voot etc. which glamorize smoking and depict tobacco consumption without any regulation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Ministry is aware of the fact that young people are most likely to imitate harmful behaviour that they see on such platforms and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Ministry proposes to take any steps to regulate the display of tobacco products and its use on OTT Platforms similar to the regulation of display of tobacco products and its use in Films and Television Programmes under the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Rules, 2004; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND
MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS**

(SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR):

(a) to (e): The Government of India notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, under the Information Technology Act, 2000, on 25.2.2021, which provides for a Code of Ethics to be followed by publishers of news and current affairs on digital media and publishers of online curated content (OTT Platforms) and a three tier grievance redressal mechanism to look into grievances relating to violation of the Code.

The Code of Ethics for OTT Platforms, given in the Appendix to Rules, prescribes self-classification of content into 5 age based categories and requires OTT platforms to put in place appropriate access control measures to restrict access by children of content which has “A” rating. The guidelines for classification of content given in Schedule also provide for appropriate classification having regard to various themes and context.
