

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2020
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.08.2023

OTT PLATFORMS.

2020. SHRI PRATHAP SIMHA:
SHRI L.S. TEJASVI SURYA:
DR. UMESH G. JADHAV:

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

(a) whether the Government is considering the large number of complaints regarding the obscene nature of content shown on OTT (Over The Top) platforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor along with steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether the Government is also considering regulating podcasts and other audio-only content; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the existing system of content censoring/regulating?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR):

(a) to (d): The Government has notified Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) on 25th February, 2021 under Information Technology Act, 2000, which inter alia provides for publishers of online curated content (OTT platforms, podcasts etc.) to adhere to a Code of Ethics laid down in the Rules. The Code requires such publishers not to transmit any content which is prohibited by law and to undertake age based classification of content into 5 categories viz. “Universal”, “U/A 7+” (suitable for viewing by persons above 7 years of age and children under age of 7 years with parental guidance), “U/A13+” (suitable for viewing by persons above 13 years of age and children under age of 13 years with parental guidance), “U/A16+” (suitable for viewing by persons above 16 years of age and children under age of 16 years with parental guidance), and “A” (restricted to adults), based on general guidelines provided in the Schedule to the Rules.

The Rules also provide for a three-tier grievance redressal mechanism to look into grievances/ complaints relating to violation of the Code of Ethics. The complaints /grievances received by the Ministry are forwarded to the respective OTT platforms, being Level-I of the grievance redressal mechanism, for appropriate action as per the IT Rules, 2021.
