

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3238
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.08.2023

ABETTING VIDEO GAMES

3238. SHRI VISHNU DATT SHARMA:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that a new trend of violence abetting video games which are full of violence is picking up among children and adolescents in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has taken steps or planned some measures to address this issue and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether in view of harmful/excessive use of online games by gamers under 18 years of age, the Government is planning to limit the time of usage to just three hours of online games per week and make industry responsible for enforcing the regulations, like China; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The policies of the Government are aimed at ensuring a Safe & Trusted and Accountable Internet for its all users. The Government is cognizant of the risks posed by online gaming addiction and also online gaming that depicts users' harms including violence.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) was allocated the matter related to online gaming rules under the Government of India (Allocation of Business Rules), 1961. The Ministry prepared the draft amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 ("IT Rules, 2021") and commenced consultations on the same. Extensive consultations were held with stakeholders and the amendment to the IT Rules were notified on 6.4.2023. These rules enforce greater accountability on online gaming and social media intermediaries in respect of online games to ensure an Open, Safe & Trusted and Accountable Internet for Digital Nagriks.

These rules layout a comprehensive framework for catalyzing and expanding online gaming innovation and at the same time protecting citizens in cyberspace. The rules define the 'permissible online game' as such online real money games that are verified by Self-Regulatory Bodies (SRBs), as not wagering on outcome, and as free from user harm and addiction.
