

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2647
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.03.2022

ADVERSE IMPACT OF DIGITAL APP BASED GAMES

2647.SHRI VINAY DINU TENDULKAR:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that digital app based games are being advertised on the national channels and it is being claimed that money can be used through wallets in the said games;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that students and young generation, instead of playing natural games, waste their time and family's money in these digital games by skipping online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (c) the category of gambling under which the money being used in digital games falls;
- (d) whether Government is considering to ban these games; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a):Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, on 4th Dec., 2020, has issued an advisory on 'Advertisements on Online Games, Fantasy Sports, etc.' to all private satellite TV channels, "*all broadcasters are advised that the Guidelines issued by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) are complied with and the advertisements broadcast on television will adhere to the aforementioned Guidelines of ASCI.*"

The ASCI guidelines are available at <https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/Advisory.pdf>.

Further, all payments on digital platforms, providing services in India, are governed by the guidelines and rules issued by the Reserve Bank of India.

(b): The rapid expansion of Internet in India has also seen many different types of intermediaries in both the existing and the newly emerging categories. Online gaming is one of the new emerging categories of intermediaries which are also rapidly expanding all around the world. Government is aware of the possible risks and challenges including that of user harms associated with online

games. This Ministry has also received grievances regarding ill-effects of online games and gambling.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has conducted a study on “Effects (Physical, Behavioural and Psycho-Social) of using Mobile Phones and other devices with internet accessibility by children”. As per the report, 78.90 percent of children spend between 0-2 hours on smartphones for using the internet, playing games, listening to music, and chatting etc. 23.80 percent of children surveyed use smart phones while they are in bed, before going to sleep which increase with age. This has adverse impact on children. Use of smart phones at inappropriate times can have detrimental impact on health and well-being of children. The study is available on NCPCR’s website at the following link-

<https://ncpcr.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=1&&sublinkid=2145&lid=2044>

(c) to (e): “Betting and gambling” are listed as State subjects under Entries 34 of List II in Seventh Schedule of Constitution of India, thereby giving States the power to legislate in this domain. Accordingly, the States/ Union Territories have enacted their laws to deal with gambling including which are available online within their jurisdictions.

This Ministry blocks Apps/URLs including online games, based on the specific requests received from the designated Nodal Officers of the Ministries/States on grounds of integrity and sovereignty of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relationship with foreign states, public orders and to prevent incitement to the commission of any cognizable offences relating with above circumstances following due process specified in the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009, notified under section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000.
