GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2332
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2022

ACCESSIBILITY OF OFFSHORE BETTING/GAMBLING WEBSITES

2332. SHRI ANEEL PRASAD HEGDE:

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

(a) whether the Ministry is aware that offshore betting/gambling websites are easily accessible in India and are causing physical, psychological and financial harm to users;
(b) if so, whether any complaints have been received and the steps the Ministry is taking to protect people against such harm;
(c) the steps being taken to prevent offshore platforms from advertising on Indian online websites and streaming platforms in violation of Government guidelines and rules; and
(d) whether the Ministry is looking to block these websites and issue orders to ISPs in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a), (b) and (d**):** Betting and gambling is illegal in most parts of the country. All forms of gambling and betting come under the purview of State Governments and they have enacted their laws to deal with the same within their jurisdictions under List-II of the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

This Ministry has also received grievances of offshore betting/gambling websites being accessible in India. 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. States/UTs are primarily responsible for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes through their Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs). The Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) at Centre and States take appropriate legal action as per provisions of law and when appropriate.

As per the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 as notified by the Government, intermediaries are expected to remove any information violative of any law in India as and when brought to their knowledge either through a court order or through a notice by an appropriate government or its authorised agency.

(c): The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has issued an advisory to all private satellite TV channels on 'Advertisements on Online Games, Fantasy Sports, etc.'. According to the advisory, "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." Further, the online and social media, including the online advertisement intermediaries and publishers, are advised not to display advertisements of online betting platforms in India or target such advertisements towards the Indian audience.

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