

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2485
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.03.2025**

**PROPOSAL FOR STRINGENT LAWS TO CHECK VULGAR CONTENT ON
SOCIAL MEDIA**

2485 SMT. MAUSAM B NOOR:

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

(a) the existing mechanism to check telecast of vulgar and sex related content through social media platforms illegally; and

(b) whether Government proposes to make the existing laws more stringent keeping in view the fact that the said laws are not much effective to stop misuse of these platforms?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(DR. L MURUGAN):

(a) & (b) The Government has notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 ("IT Rules, 2021") on 25.02.2021 under the Information Technology Act,2000.

For the user generated content on intermediary platforms, Part-II of IT Rules, 2021, administered by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeiTY) casts specific due diligence obligations on intermediaries, including social media intermediaries to make reasonable efforts by themselves and to cause the users of their computer resource to not host, store, transmit, display or publish, etc. any such information that is obscene, pornographic, invasive of another's privacy, insulting or harassing on the basis of gender, racially or ethnically objectionable, or promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion or caste with the intent to incite violence, or harmful to child or that is relating or encouraging money laundering or gambling, or that is misinformation, patently false information, untrue or misleading in nature, or that threatens the unity, integrity, defence, security or sovereignty of India, public order, or that violates any law for the time being in force.

Similarly for the publishers of news and current affairs on digital media and publishers of online curated content (OTT Platforms), Part-III of the IT Rules, 2021, administered by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, inter-alia, provide for a Code of Ethics for such publishers which, inter alia, requires the publishers not to transmit

any content which is prohibited by law for the time being in force and to undertake age based self-classification of content into 5 categories, based on general guidelines provided in the Schedule to the Rules.

Besides, Section 79(3)(b) of IT Act, 2000 provides for notification by appropriate Governments of unlawful act or content to the intermediaries for removing/disabling access to such content. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has taken action and blocked 18 OTT platforms in March 2024 for publishing obscene and vulgar content under these provisions.

The Government takes action against obscene/vulgar content on OTT platforms that is found to be violative of Code of Ethics and other Indian laws under the existing statutory framework.
