

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5187

TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.04.2025

VIOLATION OF RELIGION SENTIMENTS ON OTT PLATFORMS

5187. SHRI BALYA MAMA SURESH GOPINATH MHATRE:

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

(a) whether the Government is aware that the content/web series aired on OTT platforms often contain excessive depictions of sex, violence, abuse, vulgarity and content disrespectful to religious sentiments;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto along with the number of complaints related to such content received so far, State/UT-wise particularly in Maharashtra;

(c) the current legal procedures and penalties applicable for violations of religious sentiments and other objectionable content on OTT platforms;

(d) whether the Government has any proposal to introduce new regulatory laws or establish a dedicated regulatory authority for OTT platforms to address concerns related to objectionable, vulgar, obscene, sensitive or fake content; and

(e) if so, the specific details of the proposal and the timeline fixed for its implementation?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING;
AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. L MURUGAN):**

(a) to (e): 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.

Part-III of these Rules, administered by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, provides for a Code of Ethics for publishers of online curated content (OTT platforms) and three tier grievance redressal mechanism to address grievances relating to violation of the Code of Ethics by the OTT platforms. The Code provides for general principles to be followed by OTT platforms which inter alia provide that a publisher shall take into consideration India's multi-racial and multi-religious context and exercise due caution and discretion when featuring the activities, beliefs, practices or view of any racial or religious group. The Code also requires OTT players not to transmit any content which is prohibited by law and to undertake age based self-classification of content into 5 categories, as under:

Nature of Content (suitable for)	Classification
Unrestricted access, regardless of age, and is family friendly	U
For persons aged 7 years and above, and can be viewed by a person under the age of 7 years with parental guidance	U/A 7+

For persons aged 13 years and above, and can be viewed by a person under the age of 13 years with parental guidance	U/A 13+
For persons aged 16 years and above, and can be viewed by a person under the age of 16 years with parental guidance	U/A 16+
Restricted to adults	A

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 takes action against OTT platforms for hosting content which is violative of the Code of Ethics or other Indian laws under the existing statutory framework.
