

No. DM/15/2022-DM
Government of India
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
A Wing, Shastri Bhawan
New Delhi – 110 001

August 25, 2023

ADVISORY

To,

- (i) Newspapers registered under Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867
- (ii) Private Satellite Television Channels
- (iii) Publishers of news and current affairs content on digital media
- (iv) Online Advertisement Intermediaries
- (v) Social Media Platforms

Subject: Advisory on Advertisements including Surrogate Advertisements of Online Betting Platforms- reg.

The Ministry has issued Advisories from time to time for television, print, and digital media, including social media platforms, to refrain from publishing, broadcasting advertisements of online betting platforms and/or any such product/service depicting these platforms in a surrogate manner. The online advertisement intermediaries have also been advised not to target such advertisements towards the Indian audience. Advisories issued by the Ministry on 13.06.2022, 03.10.2022 and 06.04.2023 are enclosed for reference.

2. The above mentioned Advisories clearly mention that betting and gambling is an illegal activity and hence advertisements/promotion of such activities directly or indirectly on any of the media platforms falls foul of the various statutes, including under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Press Council Act 1978, etc. Attention is also invited to the recently amended rule 3 (1) (b) of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 which provide that intermediaries shall make reasonable efforts by itself, and to cause the users of its computer resource to not host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, store, update or share any information that **“is in the nature of an online game that is not verified as a permissible online game; (x) is in the nature of advertisement or surrogate advertisement or promotion of an online game that is not a permissible online game, or of any online gaming intermediary offering such an online game;”**

3. It may be noted that recently, the Central Government has taken action against a network of agents who had collected substantial money from users of gambling apps and subsequently

funneled the funds out of India. In this regard, it may be noted that advertisements of gambling/betting platforms not only pose significant financial and socio-economic risk for the consumers, especially youth and children, but has linkages to money laundering networks, thereby threatening the financial security of the country.

4. Despite the above mentioned illegalities as well as the high chance of black money being used to pay for such advertisements. It has come to the notice that certain media entities, including advertisement intermediaries and social media platforms, have been allowing direct and indirect advertisements of betting and gambling platforms during major sporting events, including cricket tournaments. It is also observed that there is a tendency to spike promotion of such betting and gambling platforms during a major sporting event, especially cricket, and one such important international event is beginning in a few days from now.

5. As the nodal Ministry for the media industry in India, the Ministry advises all stakeholders, including the media entities, online advertisement intermediaries and social media platforms, to immediately refrain from showing such advertisements/promotional content in any form whatsoever, failing which the Government would be constrained to take appropriate action under the various statutes.

This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

Encl: as above.



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Copy to:-

1. Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India.
2. Secretary, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.
3. Secretary, Press Council of India.
4. Self-Regulatory Bodies under Cable Television Network (Amendment) Rules, 2021.
5. Self-Regulatory Bodies under Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.
6. Online Advertisement Intermediaries.
7. Social Media Platforms.
8. Secretary, Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)
9. Various associations of print media and electronic media.