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25 OTT Platforms Banned in India for Obscene Content, Including Ullu and ALTT

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In a significant crackdown on digital obscenity, the Indian government has blocked access to 25 over-the-top (OTT) streaming platforms accused of distributing pornographic and vulgar content. The banned platforms, including Ullu, ALTT (formerly ALT Balaji), Desiflix, and Mojflix, had reportedly amassed millions of viewers despite being relatively unknown in mainstream circles.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) issued the order following recommendations from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and a parliamentary panel on IT. The government invoked several legal provisions, including sections of the IT Act, the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, to justify the ban.

According to official statements, the decision came after extensive monitoring revealed that these platforms regularly hosted content deemed obscene, sexually explicit, and harmful to public decency. Many of the apps reportedly lacked age restrictions and were easily accessible via direct downloads, despite being removed from mainstream app stores.

“These platforms were promoting content that was soft porn in the guise of web series,” said a senior official from the MIB. “Such content undermines the standards of decency expected in Indian society and violates legal guidelines.”

Among the banned platforms, Ullu and ALTT had the highest visibility, with traffic in the millions. App intelligence firms reported that the combined downloads of these apps exceeded 100 million, demonstrating their deep reach in urban and semi-urban markets. Some apps charged nominal subscription fees, making them accessible to a wide audience.

This is not the first time Indian authorities have taken action against such platforms. A similar ban was imposed in March 2024, targeting 18 OTT platforms and over 50 websites and social media handles.

The latest move has received support from child protection agencies and women’s rights groups, which have long raised concerns over unregulated erotic content online. However, critics warn that enforcement may remain a challenge, as such platforms often resurface under different names or web domains.

The government has urged citizens to report objectionable content and pledged continued monitoring of the digital entertainment space. Meanwhile, digital rights advocates have cautioned against overreach, calling for clearer content guidelines and due process.