

## 43 OTT Platforms Blocked for Vulgar Content, Vaishnaw Informs Parliament



In a move to safeguard digital content, India's Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw, informed Parliament on Tuesday that 43 Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms have been blocked for violating regulations concerning vulgar and inappropriate content. This action highlights the government's ongoing efforts to regulate online streaming services and ensure that content adheres to cultural and societal norms.

The announcement was made during a parliamentary session where Vaishnaw elaborated on the government's commitment to enforcing stricter guidelines for digital platforms. According to the minister, these OTT platforms had been flagged for broadcasting content that was deemed offensive, vulgar, or not in line with Indian values. The government's response comes as part of a broader push to regulate online media and prevent the spread of material that could undermine public morality or promote harmful behavior.

The blocking of the 43 platforms follows a series of consultations and warnings issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), aimed at enforcing compliance with the recently implemented guidelines for OTT content. These guidelines, which came into effect in 2021, were established to provide a framework for content creators, focusing on responsible and respectful media production.

Vaishnav's statement comes after numerous complaints from the public, civil society groups, and cultural organizations about the rising levels of explicit content in digital entertainment. India's rapidly growing OTT sector, which boasts platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ Hotstar, has seen a surge in viewership, especially among younger audiences. However, critics argue that the content available on many of these platforms often crosses the line when it comes to decency.

The government has stressed that its action is not a blanket ban on OTT platforms but a targeted response to content that clearly violates set standards. The blocked platforms are now under review, with the Ministry indicating that the operators will be given an opportunity to rectify the content violations and reapply for operation licenses if they meet the stipulated guidelines.

Experts believe the government's decision is an important step toward balancing freedom of expression with cultural sensitivities. "It's essential to create a safe digital environment where content is respectful and appropriate for all age groups," said Dr. Sandeep Kumar, a media analyst based in New Delhi.

As India continues to refine its digital content regulations, the focus will likely shift to a more comprehensive framework that includes age-based ratings and further scrutiny of content. What remains to be seen is whether this action will set a precedent for other nations to follow or lead to more disputes between governments and OTT platforms globally.