

# Regulations for ott and online news content

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- Govt frames new rules to hold social media, OTT accountable for content.

## Regulations for ott and online news content

- The rules, which seek to regulate digital news media and video streaming platforms, borrow heavily from the existing regulations and the structure governing the television media, including the content codes and the grievance redressal structure.
- For instance, digital news platforms will have to follow the programme code under the Cable Television Networks Regulation Act and Norms of Journalistic Conduct of the Press Council of India, which broadly guide the content put out in television and print media.
- Similarly, OTT platforms will not stream content, which is against the sovereignty and integrity of the country, endangers security of state, which is detrimental to India's friendly relations with foreign countries, and content, which is likely to incite violence or disturb public order.
- The platforms also have to take into consideration India's multi-racial and multi-religious context, and exercise due caution and discretion when featuring the activities, beliefs, practices, or views of any racial or religious group, according to the rules.
- The grievance redressal structure that they are mandated to set up will be a three-tier structure.
- The first tier will be a grievance redressal mechanism to be established by the platforms themselves.
- The second tier will be a self-regulatory body to be

headed by a retired Supreme Court or high court judge or an eminent person.

- The third tier will be an 'oversight mechanism' by the government as part of which an inter-ministerial committee (IMC) will be set up – on the same lines as followed for the TV industry.
- In the television industry, self-regulatory industry bodies such as the BCCC (Broadcasting Content Complaints Council) for non-news channels and the NBSA (News Broadcasting Standards Authority) take a call on complaints over violation of the programme code.
- An IMC decides on specific complaints over violation and can recommend varying actions, including taking the channel off air for a specific number of days.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Identify 'first originator' of content that authorities consider anti-national
- Appoint grievance officer, resolve complaints in 15 days
- File monthly compliance report on complaints received, action taken

### **DIGITAL NEWS**

- Follow Press Council of India, Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act norms.
- Self-regulatory bodies to oversee adherence to Code of Ethics
- I&B Ministry to form panel, oversight mechanism

### **OTT PLATFORMS**

- Self-classify content into five age-based categories: U (universal), U/A 7+ (years), U/A 13+, U/A 16+, and A.
- Parental locks for any content classified as U/A 13+ or above.
- Age verification mechanism for content classified as 'A' (adult)