



Censorship of Web series – Pros & Cons

Description

The Bombay HC has issued notice to the I&B Ministry, Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Nagpur police commissioner and asked for their response, in regard to the PIL filed by Divya Ganeshprasad Gontia. The court has advised setting up of a pre-screening committee to regulate the movies and shows which are released directly on online platforms like Netflix & Hotstar. Thus it is clear that censorship for web series and content on digital medium is very much on the cards.

But online platforms like Netflix, Hotstar, AltBalaji, SonyLiv and others have signed self-censorship code, which prohibits signatories from showing any content that has been banned by Indian Courts. Amazon Prime Video, the streaming service of e-commerce giant has kept out of the code stating that the existing laws are adequate.

While the decision of probable censorship has aroused a mixed reaction on social media by Indian film industry and the general public, it is important to understand the pros and cons that would come along.

Pros :-

- Due to the advantage of wide reach, the web series and content on digital media is easily accessible to all. Children are at major disadvantage when they view content that is related to violence, strong language and sex.
- In the past years people have filed legal complaints regarding the harsh content on digital platform and arguing for censorship on series and movies released on internet that have the potential to create bad influence.
- The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has reported that the casual usage of sex and crass language in such web series is a bait to attract the audience. This raises a question if the online entertainment industry should be kept law free and what affects this would have on children.

