Theme:

- On 11th November 2020, Central government issued a notification which stated that OTT (Over The Top) platforms and online news portals will come under 'Information & Broadcasting (I&B) ministry'. Before this, they were under the 'Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)'. This move caused fears of censorship of both OTT platforms and online news portals because traditional print media and television, which were under I&B ministry are regulated.
- OTT platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hostar etc. are gaining viewers at a rapid rate, especially during the pandemic, when people are forced to stay at homes.
- 'The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)' proposed the Universal Self-Regulation Code in January 2019 and a revised version in September 2020. But I&B ministry rejected the code stating that it is not clear and brought the recent notification.

Right:

- Censorship helps in preventing anti-social, hateful and explicit content from reaching the audience and thereby social order can be maintained.
- Censorship can protect the sentiments of people by preventing the content that is hurtful to some cultures or communities.

Wrong:

- To get the certificate & a clearance, sometimes producers are forced to struggle, especially when the content criticises government & their policies. This will discourage diverse opinions, innovation & creativity. So, there will be a threat to freedom of expression.
- Power & money may control the content to pursue their goals and political propaganda.
- For some people, a film may seem offensive but for some others, it may seem progressive. So, it is unfair to dictate what to watch and what not to watch.
- We already have laws such as the 'Information & Technology Act, 2000' to deal with hateful and explicit content. And hence there is no need for censorship.
- These days, people are preferring OTT content over television content, because of the quality of content. But if it is censored, the content may stoop to the same level as television content. This may discourage investment in OTT platforms. OTT platforms created many employment opportunities, and lack of investment may reverse the progress.

- Unlike Television, <u>people can choose what to watch on OTT platforms</u>. And OTT platforms mention the appropriate age to watch that content. So, there is no need to censor them.
- There is so much explicit content present on the internet. <u>Censoring only OTT platforms leaving the entire internet seems unfair</u>.
- <u>Self-regulatory bodies are better</u> than government censorship because the audience can watch diverse content rather than narrow views.

Conclusion:

OTT platforms are gaining so much user base nowadays. They are promoting varied opinions and thoughts. Indian directors and producers are creating content on OTT platforms, which are competing with international content. Censorship of OTT may discourage investments and diverse content. And hence, self-regulation code is much better than censorship in the case of OTT platforms.

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Your Turn...

Do you think OTT platforms should be censored? What's your take on this topic? Express your thoughts through the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

References:

- [Censoring Netflix & Other OTT Platforms: Who Stands To Gain?](#) –
- [Moral Policing of OTT Platforms Is Only the Latest Episode in India's Saga of Censorship](#)

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