



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
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# Grievance Appellate Committees

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**Why is in news?** Three Grievance Appellate Committees (GACs) Notified on the recently amended "IT Rules 2021"

The Centre **established three Grievance Appellate Committees** based on the recently amended **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 ("IT Rules 2021")**.

As per the notification, three Grievance Appellate Committees have been constituted with **three members each**.

The IT rules 2021 provide for creating avenues for **grievance redressal apart from Courts** and ensure that the Constitutional rights of Indian citizens are not contravened by any Big-tech Platform by ensuring new accountability standards for SSIMs.

During the extensive public consultations on the IT Rules, the Ministry of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, had articulated the stand of the Government that - **safety and trust of every Digital Nagrik**, and robust grievance redressal system to **ensure accountability of all Internet platforms** offering a service or product, was an unambiguous goal and that all grievances must be 100% addressed.

The Grievance Appellate Committee (GAC) is a **critical piece of overall policy and legal framework** to **ensure that Internet in India is Open, Safe & Trusted and Accountable**.

The need for GAC was created due to large numbers of grievances being left unaddressed or unsatisfactorily addressed by Internet Intermediaries.

GAC is expected to **create a culture of responsiveness amongst all Internet Platforms and Intermediaries** towards their consumers.

The GAC will be a **virtual Digital platform** that will **operate only online and digitally** - wherein the entire appeal process, from filing of appeal to the decision thereof, shall be conducted digitally.

Users will have the option to **appeal against decision of the grievance officer** of the social media intermediaries and other online intermediaries before this new appellate body. The Committee will endeavour to address the user's appeal **within a period of 30 days**.

The Government had earlier interacted with major social media intermediaries.

Keeping in view of the transition period required for the intermediaries as per their requests and technical requirement, the online platform will be operational in one month of this notification of the Grievance Appellate Committee, i.e. from 1st March 2023.

Periodic reviews of GACs and reporting and disclosures of GAC orders will also be part of process.

**Kamaraj IAS Academy**

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477** / Whatsapp : **09710729833**