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The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025

(ACT NO. 32 OF 2025)

[*As on the* 5th *May*, 2026]

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

S.O	*for*	Statutory Order.
G.S.R	”	General Statutory Rules.
Notifn.	”	Notification.

IndiaCode

THE PROMOTION AND REGULATION OF ONLINE GAMING ACT, 2025

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ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

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CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

SECTIONS

1. Short title, extent and commencement.
2. Definitions.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

3. Recognition and promotion of e-sport.
4. Recognition and development of online social games.

CHAPTER III

PROHIBITION

5. Prohibition of online money game and online money gaming service.
6. Prohibition of advertisement related to online money game.
7. Prohibition of transfer of fund.

CHAPTER IV

AUTHORITY ON ONLINE GAMING

8. Establishment of an Authority.

CHAPTERV

OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

9. Penalty for contravention.
10. Cognizance of offences.
11. Offences by companies.
12. Non-compliance by any other person.

CHAPTER VI

MISCELLANEOUS

13. Compliance with direction of Central Government.
14. Blocking of online money gaming service.
15. Power to investigate offences.
16. Search and seizure of property.
17. Protection of action taken in good faith.
18. Act not in derogation of any other law.
19. Power of Central Government to make rules.
20. Power to remove difficulties.

IndiaCode

THE PROMOTION AND REGULATION OF ONLINE GAMING ACT, 2025

ACT NO. 32 OF 2025

[22*nd August*, 2025.]

An Act to promote and regulate the online gaming sector including e-sports, educational games and social gaming; to provide for the appointment of an Authority for coordinated policy support, strategic development and regulatory oversight of the sector; to prohibit the offering, operation, facilitation, advertisement, *[promotion] and participation in online money games through any computer resource, mobile device or the internet, particularly where such activities operate across State borders or from foreign jurisdictions; to protect individuals, especially youth and vulnerable populations, from the adverse social, economic, psychological and privacy-related impacts of such games; to ensure the responsible use of digital technologies; to maintain public order and protect public health; to safeguard the integrity of financial systems and the security and sovereignty of the State; to establish a uniform national-level legal framework in the public interest; and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

WHEREAS the online gaming sector has rapidly evolved into one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing segments of the digital and creative economy, offering significant opportunities for innovation, cognitive development, employment generation, technological advancement and global competitiveness;

AND WHEREAS India possesses a large and growing pool of young professionals with technological capabilities and rapidly expanding domestic market, which together enable the country to assume a leadership role in the global online gaming value chain;

AND WHEREAS the online gaming ecosystem comprises diverse segments, including e-sports, casual and social games, educational games and online money games, and is currently operating in the absence of a dedicated institutional and legal framework necessary for strategic coordination, capacity building, common infrastructure, research and responsible innovation;

AND WHEREAS the lack of a coherent and enabling legal framework has hindered the sector's structured development and the promotion of responsible gaming practices, requiring urgent policy intervention and support mechanisms;

AND WHEREAS the parallel proliferation of online money games accessible through mobile phones, computers and the internet, and offering monetary returns against user deposits has led to serious social, financial, psychological and public health harms, particularly among young individuals and economically disadvantaged groups;

AND WHEREAS such games often use manipulative design features, addictive algorithms, bots and undisclosed agents, undermining fairness, transparency and user protection, while promoting compulsive behaviour leading to financial ruin;

AND WHEREAS platforms offering online gaming system are often aggressively marketed through pervasive advertising campaigns, including celebrity and influencer endorsements, thereby amplifying their reach and impact especially among the youth and vulnerable groups;

AND WHEREAS the unchecked expansion of online money gaming services has been linked to unlawful activities including financial fraud, money-laundering, tax evasion, and in some cases, the financing of terrorism, thereby posing threats to national security, public order and the integrity of the State; .

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* In the long title of Act No.32 of 2025, for the word "ptomotion", read "promotion", *Vide* Corrigenda dated 28.8.2025, published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part. II, Sec. 1.

AND WHEREAS considering the deleterious and negative impact of online money games on the individuals, families, society and the nation and given the technical aspects including the very nature of the electronic medium used for online money games, the algorithms applied and the national and transnational networks involved therein;

AND WHEREAS many such services operate from offshore jurisdictions, bypassing domestic laws, undermining state-level regulations, and presenting significant enforcement challenges in terms of extra-territorial jurisdiction and inter-State inconsistencies;

AND WHEREAS it is expedient in the public interest for the Union Government to assume legislative competence over the online gaming sector to ensure the creation of a secure, structured and innovation-friendly digital environment, while addressing the associated risks to public health, consumer safety, public morality and financial sovereignty;

AND WHEREAS it is necessary to clearly delineate and categorise the various forms of online games and to provide a tailored legal framework to govern each sub-sector of the industry appropriately.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-sixth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

1. Short title, extent and commencement.—(*1*) This Act may be called the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025.

(*2*) It extends to the whole of India and also applies to online money gaming service offered within the territory of India or operated from outside the territory of India.

(*3*) It shall come into force on such date[1] as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

2. **Definitions**.—(*1*) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(*a*) "advertisement" shall have the meaning as assigned to it in the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (35 of 2019);

(*b*) "Authority" means an Authority constituted under section 8;

(*c*) "e-sport" means an online game which—

(*i*) is played as part of multi-sports events;

(*ii*) involves organised competitive events between individuals or teams, conducted in multiplayer formats governed by predefined rules;

(*iii*) is duly recognised under the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 (25 of 2025), and registered with the Authority or agency under section 3;

(*iv*) has outcome determined solely by factors such as physical dexterity, mental agility, strategic thinking or other similar skills of users as players;

(*v*) may include payment of registration or participation fees solely for the purpose of entering the competition or covering administrative costs and may include performance-based prize money *[for] the player; and

(*vi*) shall not involve the placing of bets, wagers or any other stakes by any person, whether or not such person is a participant, including any winning out of such bets, wagers or any other stakes;

1. 1st day of May, 2026, *vide* notifn. No. S.O. 1994 (E), dated 22th day of April, 2026, see Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, sec. 3 (ii).

* In page 3, line 21, of Act No.32 of 2025, for the word "by", read "for", *Vide* Corrigenda dated 28.8.2025, published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part. II, Sec. 1.

(*d*) "internet" means the combination of computer facilities and electromagnetic transmission media, and related equipment and software, comprising the interconnected worldwide network of computer networks that transmits information based on a protocol for controlling such transmission;

(*e*) "notification" means a notification published in the Official Gazette and the term "notify" shall be construed accordingly;

(*f*) "online game" means any game, which is played on an electronic or a digital device and is managed and operated as a software through the internet or any other kind of technology facilitating electronic communication;

(*g*) "online money game" means an online game, irrespective of whether such game is based on skill, chance, or both, played by a user by paying fees, depositing money or other stakes in expectation of winning which entails monetary and other enrichment in return of money or other stakes; but shall not include any e-sports;

(*h*) "online money gaming service" means a service offered by a person for entering or playing the online money game;

(*i*) "online social game" means an online game which—

(*i*) does not involve staking of money or other stakes or participation with the expectation of winning by way of monetary gain in return of money or other stakes;

(*ii*) may allow access through payment of a subscription fee or one-time access fee, provided that such payment is not in the nature of a stake or wager;

(*iii*) is offered solely for entertainment, recreation or skill-development purposes; and

(*iv*) is not an online money game or e-sport;

(*j*) "other stakes" means anything recognised as equivalent or convertible to money and includes credits, coins, token or objects or any other similar thing, by whatever name called and whether it is real or virtual, which is purchased by paying money directly or by indirect means or as part of, or in relation to, an online game;

(*k*) "person" includes—

(*i*) an individual;

(*ii*) a Hindu undivided family;

(*iii*) a company;

(*iv*) a firm;

(*v*) an association of persons or a body of individuals, whether incorporated or not;

(*vi*) the State; and

(*vii*) every artificial juristic person, not falling within any of the preceding sub-clauses;

(*l*) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(*m*) "user" means any person who accesses or avails online game.

(*2*) Words and expressions used but not defined in this Act but defined in the Information Technology Act, 2000 (21 of 2000) and rules made thereunder shall have the same meaning as respectively assigned to them in that Act and the said rules.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

3. Recognition and promotion of e-sport.—(*1*) The Central Government shall take steps as it considers necessary to recognise and register e-sports with the Authority or agency, as the case may be, as a legitimate form of competitive sport in India and to promote and develop e-sports.

(*2*) Without prejudice to the generality of sub-section (*1*), such steps may include—

(*a*) formation of guidelines and standards for the organisation and conduct of e-sports events;

(*b*) establishment of training academies, research centres and other institutions dedicated to advancement of e-sports;

(*c*) introduction of incentive schemes, awareness campaigns and public outreach programmes to encourage innovation and establishment of new enterprises to create e-sport technology platforms;

(*d*) coordination with State Governments and recognised sporting federations for integration of e-sports within broader sporting policy initiatives; and

(*e*) such other measures which are necessary to promote the sector, as may be prescribed.

4. **Recognition and development of online social games**.—(*1*) The Central Government shall take steps as it considers necessary to recognise, categorise and register online social games with the Authority or agency, as the case may be, and facilitate the development and availability of online social games for recreational and educational purposes.

(*2*) Without prejudice to the generality of sub-section (*1*), such steps may include—

(*a*) creation of mechanism for the registration of online social games;

(*b*) creation of platforms or programmes to support the development and distribution of online social games;

(*c*) supporting initiatives aimed at increasing public access to safe and age-appropriate social gaming content;

(*d*) undertaking awareness programmes to highlight the positive use of social games for recreation, skill-development and digital literacy;

(*e*) coordination with State Governments and educational or recreational institutions for promotion of social gaming as part of broader digital engagement strategies; and

(*f*) such other measures which are necessary to promote the sector, as may be prescribed.

CHAPTER III

PROHIBITION

5. **Prohibition of online money game and online money gaming service**.—(*1*) No person shall offer, aid, abet, induce or otherwise indulge or engage in the offering of online money game and online money gaming service.

6. **Prohibition of advertisement related to online money game**.—No person shall make, cause to be made, aid, abet, induce, or otherwise be involved in the making or causing to be made any advertisement, in any media including electronic means of communication, which directly or indirectly promotes or induces any person to play any online money game or indulge in any activity promoting online money *[game].

7. **Prohibition of transfer of fund**.—No bank, financial institution, or any other person facilitating financial transactions or authorisation of funds shall engage in, permit, aid, abet, induce or otherwise facilitate any transaction or authorisation of funds towards payment for any online money gaming service.

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* In page 5, line 27, of Act No.32 of 2025, for the word “gaming”, read “game”, *Vide* Corrigenda dated 28.8.2025, published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part. II, Sec.1.

CHAPTER IV

AUTHORITY ON ONLINE GAMING

8. **Establishment of an Authority**.—(*1*) The Central Government may, by notification, constitute an Authority consisting of a Chairperson and such number of other Members or designate any existing Authority or Authorities or any agency to assist it in performing any of the functions under this Act.

(*2*) The Central Government may vest the Authority or agency, as the case may be, with all or any of the following powers, namely:—

(*a*) to determine, on the receipt of an application from any person offering an online game or on *suo motu* basis, whether a particular online game is an online money game or otherwise, after making such inquiry as it deems necessary;

(*b*) to recognise, categorise and register online games in such manner as may be prescribed; and

(*c*) such other powers and functions as may be prescribed.

(*3*) Every person offering, organising or facilitating any online game shall comply with the directions, orders, guidelines or codes of practice issued by the Central Government or the Authority or agency in discharge of their functions under this Act.

(*4*) The Central Government may prescribe the following, namely:—

(*a*) composition and qualification for appointment of Chairperson and Members;

(*b*) salary, allowances payable to them and their term of office;

(*c*) disqualification for appointment and continuation as Chairperson and Members;

(*d*) resignation by Members and filling of vacancy;

(*e*) proceedings of the Authority;

(*f*) officers and employees of the Authority;

(*g*) powers to be exercised by the Chairperson;

(*h*) handling of complaints and grievances related to online games including manner of inquiry; and

(*i*) any other matter to further the objective of this Act.

(*5*) The Authority or agency, as the case may be, may respond to the complaints relating to online games which are prejudicial to the interests of users, forwarded either in writing or in electronic mode.

CHAPTER V

OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

9. **Penalty for contravention**.—(*1*) Any person who offers online money gaming service in contravention of section 5 shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years or with fine which may extend to one crore rupees or with both.

(*2*) Any person who makes or causes to make advertisement in any media, in contravention of section 6, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to fifty lakh rupees or with both.

(*3*) Any person who engages in any transaction or authorisation of funds in contravention of section 7 shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years or with fine which may extend to one crore rupees or with both.

(*4*) If any person convicted of an offence under sub-section (*1*) or sub-section (*3*) is again convicted of an offence under the same provision, he shall be punished with imprisonment for the second and for every subsequent offence for a term which shall not be less than three years, but may extend to five

IndiaCode

years and shall also be liable to fine which shall not be less than one crore rupees, but may extend to two crore rupees.

(*5*) If any person convicted of an offence under sub-section (*2*) is again convicted of an offence under the same provision, he shall be punished with imprisonment for the second and for every subsequent offence for a term which shall not be less than two years, but may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine which shall not be less than fifty lakh rupees, but may extend to one crore rupees.

10. **Cognizance of offences.—**Notwithstanding anything contained in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (46 of 2023), offences under section 5 and section 7 shall be cognizable and non-bailable.

11. **Offences by companies**.—(*1*) Where an offence has been committed by a company, every person who, at the time the offence was committed was in charge of, and was responsible to, the company for the conduct of that part of the business of the company as well as the company, shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

(*2*) Nothing contained in sub-section (*1*) shall render any such person liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly under this Act, if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he had exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.

(*3*) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (*1*), where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company and it is proved that the offence has been committed with the consent or connivance of, or is attributable to any neglect on the part of any director, manager, secretary or other officer of the company, such director, manager, secretary or other officer shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly:

Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall hold an independent director or a non-executive director of a company who is not involved in the actual decision making, liable for such offence.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section, the expressions—

(*a*) "company" means a body corporate, and includes—

(*i*) a firm; and

(*ii*) an association of persons or a body of individuals whether incorporated or not; and

(*b*) "director", in relation to—

(*i*) a firm, means a partner in the firm;

(*ii*) any association of persons or a body of individuals, means any member controlling its affairs thereof.

12. **Non-compliance by any other person**.—(*1*) Any person who fails to comply with any direction or order issued by the Central Government or the Authority or agency under sub-section (*3*) of section 8 shall be liable to penalty which may extend to ten lakh rupees or may include suspension or cancellation of registration, and prohibition from offering, facilitating or promoting such games for such period as may be determined by the Central Government or the Authority.

(*2*) No action under sub-section (*1*) shall be taken without giving an opportunity of being heard.

CHAPTER VI

MISCELLANEOUS

13. **Compliance with direction of Central Government**.—Every person shall comply with any direction issued by the Central Government in relation to online money gaming services.

14. **Blocking of online money gaming service**.—In case of failure to comply with the provisions of section 5, section 6 and section 7, notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or in section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (21 of 2000), any information generated, transmitted, received

or hosted in any computer resource in relation to online money gaming service shall be liable to be blocked for access by the public in such manner as provided in that Act.

15. **Power to investigate offences.—**Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or in any other law for the time being in force, the Central Government may, by notification, authorise any officer or class of officers of the Central Government, Authority or State Government to exercise the powers of investigation in respect of offences under this Act.

16. **Search and seizure of property**.—(*1*) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (46 of 2023), any officer authorised under section 15 may enter any place, whether physical or digital, and search and arrest without warrant any person found therein who is reasonably suspected of having committed or of committing or of being about to commit any offence under this Act.

(*2*) Where any person is arrested under sub-section (*1*) by an officer other than a police officer as referred to in sub-section (*1*), such officer shall, without unnecessary delay, take or send the person arrested before a magistrate having jurisdiction in the case or before the officer-in-charge of a police station.

(*3*) The provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (46 of 2023) shall, subject to the provisions of this section, apply, so far as may be, in relation to any entry, search or arrest made under this section.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section, "any place" shall include any premises, building, vehicle, computer resource, virtual digital space, electronic records or electronic storage device and the officer may, if necessary, gain access to such computer resource, virtual digital space, electronic records or electronic storage device by overriding any access control or security code, where such code thereof is not available.

India Code

17. **Protection of action taken in good faith**.—No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Central Government or the Authority or any officer of the Central Government or any member, officer or other employees of the Authority for anything which is done in good faith or intended to be done under this Act or the rules made thereunder.

18. **Act not in derogation of any other law**.—The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to, and not in derogation of the provisions of any other law for the time being in force and in case of any inconsistency of this Act with any other Act, the provisions of this Act shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, have overriding effect over any such Act.

19. **Power of Central Government to make rules.**—(*1*) The Central Government may, by notification, make rules to carry out the provisions of this Act.

(*2*) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing powers, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:—

(*a*) such other measures as may be necessary to promote the sector relating to e-sports under clause (*e*) of sub-section (*2*) of section 3;

(*b*) such other measures as may be necessary to promote the sector relating to online social gaming under clause (*f*) of sub-section (*2*) of section 4;

(*c*) the manner of recognising, categorising and registering online games under clause (*b*) of sub-section (*2*) of section 8;

(*d*) such other powers and functions relating to powers of the Authority or agency under clause (*c*) of sub-section (*2*) of section 8;

(*e*) any other matter which is required to be, or may be, prescribed, or in respect of which provision is to be or may be made by rules.

(*3*) Every rule made by the Central Government shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session

immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule, or both Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

20. **Power to remove difficulties**.—(*1*) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any provisions of this Act, the Central Government may, by order published in the Official Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act as may be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty.

(*2*) No order under sub-section (*1*) shall be made after the expiry of a period of two years from the date of the commencement of this Act.

(3) Every order made under this section shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before each House of Parliament.

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STATEMENT OF OBJECT AND REASONS

The unprecedented expansion of information and communication technologies in recent years has resulted in the emergence of new forms of digital entertainment and competitive participation, most prominently in the form of online gaming. These activities have become an important means of engagement for the youth of the country.

2. The online gaming sector has emerged as one of the fastest-growing components of the creative economy, contributing significantly to innovation, employment generation and export earnings. India possesses a large pool of skilled young professionals, strong technological capabilities and a rapidly growing domestic market, which together provide an opportunity for the country to assume a leadership role in the global value chain of online gaming.

3. At present, the online gaming sector ecosystem has multiple segments. These include e-sports; online social games including casual games; and education games; and online money games. The sector operates without a dedicated institutional mechanism for strategic support, co-ordination and capacity building. The absence of an enabling legal framework has adversely impacted the sector's assured growth, development of common infrastructure, provision of specialised training and research in emerging technologies in the sector. Therefore, there is an urgent need to establish a structured mechanism for policy formulation, stakeholder engagement and facilitation of development of the sector in a transparent and coherent manner.

4. Parallelly, the unchecked and widespread proliferation of online money games which readily accessible through mobile devices, computers, and the internet, and offering monetary returns in exchange for deposited funds has led to grave social, economic, and psychological consequences across the country. These platforms often promote compulsive and addictive behaviour, resulting in financial ruin, mental health disorders, and increasing incidents of fraud and exploitation.

5. A significant number of young persons and economically vulnerable individuals have been adversely impacted by the seamless availability of these games, driven by the low cost of internet access, the ubiquity of mobile and computing devices, and the ease of app-based participation. This problem is further exacerbated by aggressive promotional campaigns, including the use of celebrity endorsements, which enhance the appeal and reach of such platforms.

6. The algorithms used in online money games are often opaque and may be designed to manipulate user engagement surreptitiously. These games can also be operated by bots or undisclosed agents, undermining fairness and transparency. Reports and studies, both national and international, have highlighted the strong association between such games and compulsive behaviours, psychological distress, financial hardship, and the disruption of family and social life, thereby posing a serious public health risk.

7. Beyond the individual, the proliferation of online money games had deleterious affect on families, society, and the economy. In certain cases, these platforms have been linked to illegal activities including money-laundering, financial fraud, the financing of terrorism, and use as messaging platform for terrorist and terrorist organisations, thereby affecting the security and sovereignty of the State.

8. A plethora of online money gaming service providers operating from offshore locations often circumvent state-specific regulations, evade taxation, and create enforcement challenges pertaining to extra-territorial concerns for domestic authorities and has raised complex challenges with respect to user safety, consumer protection, cross-border operations, and inter-State regulatory inconsistencies.

9. Considering the deleterious and negative impact of online money games on the individuals, families, society and the nation as outlined in the foregoing paragraphs and given the technical aspects including the very nature of the electronic medium used for online money games, the algorithms applied and the national and transnational networks involved, it is prudent and practical in the interest of general public to completely prohibit the activity of online money gaming, rather than attempts to regulation.

10. In light of the scope of the development of online gaming sector on one hand, it requires support and facilitation for an upright growth and on the other hand due to increasing social, financial, and regulatory risks posed to the interest of the general public by the online money gaming sector, including those relating to consumer protection, public health, public order, and national security, it is expedient in the public interest for the Union Government to assume control over this emerging industry.

11. There is a need to clearly delineate and categorise the different types of online games that are being offered and also to ensure that an appropriate enabling and legal framework is created to address the issues and concerns of each of the sub-sectors of online gaming.

12. Accordingly, the Bill proposes to establish a robust legal framework, not only prohibit online money gaming in the country but also to regulate, promote and encourage the sector for innovation and economic growth and ensure a developed, safe and responsible digital environment for all citizens.

NEW DELHI;
The 19*th August*, 2025.

ASHWINI VAISHNAW.

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