

EGF welcomes Rajasthan state government's decision to regulate the online skill gaming sector

Jaipur, March 1, 2022: The recent announcement by the Chief Minister that state government is looking to regulate the online skill gaming sector (that includes skill games like Fantasy, Rummy, Poker, Bridge, Chess etc) has invoked an enthusiastic response from skill gaming industry.

Speaking at a gathering, Sameer Barde, CEO of E-Gaming Federation (EGF), an organisation representing top online skill gaming operators in India, said, "The industry is very upbeat that Rajasthan could become the first state in India, to introduce a progressive regulatory regime for the online skill gaming sector, which has been operating in a regulatory vacuum for a long time."

Barde added, that the sector has received a big impetus after Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman announced setting up of Animation, Visual Arts, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) Task Force, in her budget speech last month.

Barde added that the government recognises the employment and revenue generation potential of this sunrise sector, which also directly benefits other crucial sectors such as fintech, semiconductors, IT, banking etc. "With the right support the online skill gaming sector, can propel a second software revolution in India. It already directly employs close to 50,000 people and creates meaningful jobs for a lot of young engineers and other professionals. Lot of states have spoken about the need to develop gaming sector. Karnataka has launched its own AVGC Centre, Telangana has talked about making Hyderabad a gaming hub, and if Rajasthan can become the first major state to introduce a progressive policy, then it will fetch a lot of investments to the state," he said.

In the last seven years, online skill gaming sector has received more than USD 2 billion in international investments. Companies such as Dream11, MPL, Games24x7, Paytm Games, Jungle Games, Head Digital Works have received investments from several top Private Equity and Venture Capital Firms. Barde feels that this number could go up further, with Supreme Court and several High Courts, reaffirming the status of games of skill as legitimate business activity. "Oftentimes, people confuse games of skill with gambling. But the courts have repeatedly held that games of skill are different from games of chance and several Supreme Court and High decisions have over the years held Rummy, Bridge, Poker, Chess and more recently Fantasy as games of skill," he said.

Coming back to the proposed reform in Rajasthan Barde, "It was very reassuring to hear Honourable Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gehlot Ji, when he spoke in the house during the ongoing budget session, about regulating the sector. We are really looking forward to it, and hope that government sets up a joint committee including industry participants. As a self-regulator for the industry, we believe we can add much value in bringing to the table the best international practices and ensuring that the policy is a win-win for all stakeholders – players, industry and the government."

About EGF:

The E-Gaming Federation (EGF) is a not-for-profit organization, founded under the Societies Regulation Act to protect consumer interest and self-regulate the Indian e-gaming sector. By developing a standard framework and operational guidelines based on the principles of safe,



transparent, fair, and responsible gaming, EGF endeavors to build a unified voice shaping a favourable policy environment for regulated online gaming.

With an objective to bring a positive change in perception regarding the e-gaming industry, EGF endorses 'Responsible Play' to protect players by allowing them to minimize or stop indulging in gameplay beyond their means or for excessive periods. EGF-certified online gaming platforms offer responsible play features to the players that are intended to ensure a fair and safe online gaming experience while protecting players from any adverse consequences of online gaming.

For more information, please contact:

Niharika Sneha, niharikasneha@egf.org.in