

# India's Gaming Industry Just Got a Rulebook

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has announced the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming (PROG) Rules, 2026, set to take effect on May 1, 2026. These rules are part of the PROG Act, 2025, a landmark legislation designed to establish India as a global leader in e-sports and digital innovation.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE

<b>Governance:</b> OGAI Online Gaming Authority of India- the new dedicated regulator	<b>Classification:</b> 90 days Once a complete application is submitted, OGAI must decide whether the game qualifies as an online money game
<b>Registration:</b> 10 years Validity of Certificate of Registration for social games & e-sports	<b>Grievance:</b> 30 days Deadline to file appeals + dispose grievances before Appellate Authority



# The Rules Are Divided into VI Parts:

## 1. PART I: Preliminary

- Applicant: Any online game service provider (a person or entity offering online games) seeking determination (classification) of an online game or registration of an e-sport or online social game under the Act, including any person authorized by such service provider
- Grievance: Any complaint or representation made by a user to an online game service provider, in writing or through digital/electronic means, concerning any act, omission, service, decision, or practice related to online social games or e-sports
- Online Game Service Provider: Any person who, alone or jointly, offers, operates, organizes, manages, or makes available one or more online games

## 2. PART II: Online Gaming Authority of India (OGAI)

- Establishes OGAI with a Chairperson (Joint Secretary rank or above from MeitY) and ex-officio members from MHA, Finance, Information & Broadcasting, Sports, and Law ministries.
- Head office located in Delhi; OGAI functions as a digital office under MeitY, with quorum set at half of functional strength.

## 3. PART III: Determination of Online Games

- Determination is mandatory when directed suo motu by OGAI, when a game is to be offered as an e-sport, or when the Central Government notifies a category.
- Determination must be made within 90 days of a complete application

## 4. PART IV: Registration of Online Games

- Registration is required when mandated by the Central Government, when a game is offered as an e-sport, or when OGAI determines registration is necessary.

- OGAI issues a digital Certificate of Registration (valid up to 10 years); it may be suspended or cancelled on grounds of misrepresentation, non-compliance, or pending penalties.
- Every service provider offering social games or e-sports must maintain a functional grievance redressal mechanism; unresolved complaints can be escalated to OGAI within 30 days.

## 5. PART V: Procedure for Imposition of Penalty

- Any aggrieved person may appeal to the Appellate Authority (MeitY Secretary) within 30 days against OGAI orders on determination, registration, cancellation, or penalties.
- Appellate Authority may confirm, modify, or set aside OGAI's order and must dispose of appeals within 30 days; it may also exercise suo motu review powers.
- All fines go to the Consolidated Fund of India.

## 6. PART VI: Miscellaneous

- Upon issuing a determination order, OGAI must publish the name and other associated details of the online money game in the list of online money games on its website or mobile application, or both.

## Conclusion

The PROG Rules, 2026 mark a decisive step toward bringing order, accountability, and user protection to India's rapidly growing online gaming sector. A key strength of the rules lies in their emphasis on **user safety features** requiring platforms to integrate safeguards such as age verification, time limits, grievance redressal systems, and fair-play monitoring. This signals a move beyond mere regulation to **responsible gaming governance**, where user protection, transparency, and platform accountability are central. Together, the Rules send a clear message: India's online gaming industry is open for growth, but only on the condition that user safety and public accountability remain non-negotiable at every level of operation.