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Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025

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The Government of India has enacted the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 to regulate the rapidly growing online gaming sector. The Act aims to prohibit harmful online money gaming services while promoting safe, responsible, and skill-based gaming in the country.

Key Provisions

The Act introduces a strict ban on online money gaming, covering both games of skill and chance when played with monetary stakes. It also prohibits the advertisement, promotion, and sponsorship of such platforms. Financial institutions, including banks and payment gateways, are restricted from processing transactions linked to these activities, ensuring a complete ecosystem-level control.

Regulatory Framework

A central regulatory authority is proposed to oversee the sector, responsible for licensing, classification, and monitoring of online games. The Act categorises games into permissible (non-monetary, skill-based games like e-sports) and prohibited (money-based games), thereby creating a clear regulatory distinction.

Penalties and Enforcement

The law prescribes stringent penalties for violations. Offering prohibited online gaming services can lead to imprisonment up to 3 years and a fine up to ₹1 crore, while advertising such platforms can attract up to 2 years imprisonment and ₹50 lakh fine. Importantly, offences under the Act are cognisable and non-bailable, ensuring strict enforcement.

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**

Consumer Protection Measures

To safeguard users, the Act mandates provisions like age verification, responsible gaming norms, and self-regulation mechanisms. These measures aim to reduce addiction, financial risks, and cyber fraud associated with online gaming platforms.

Additional Key Facts

The Act establishes a uniform national framework, replacing the earlier fragmented state-level regulations. It also applies to foreign gaming platforms operating in India. The government may block non-compliant websites under the Information Technology Act, 2000. At the same time, the policy promotes the growth of e-sports and non-monetary skill-based gaming, aligning with India's digital economy goals.

Keep Innovators in America Act

US lawmakers have introduced a bipartisan bill, the Keep Innovators in America Act, to protect the Optional Practical Training (OPT) programme for international students. The move comes amid concerns over potential policy changes that could impact post-study work opportunities in the United States.

Key Provisions

The bill seeks to codify the OPT programme into law, providing legal certainty and long-term stability. It proposes amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act, allowing international students to gain practical work experience in their field of study after graduation. This ensures continuity of the programme and protects it from abrupt executive changes.

Background and Need

The initiative arises from concerns that the OPT programme could be curtailed or eliminated, which may negatively affect the US economy and reduce its global competitiveness. Lawmakers argue that discontinuing OPT could lead to a loss of skilled international talent to other countries, weakening innovation and workforce development.

Importance for Indian Students

India is one of the largest contributors of international students in the US, making the OPT programme highly significant. It acts as a bridge between education and employment, especially for students in STEM fields, and often serves as a pathway to long-term work visas such as H-1B.

Additional Key Facts

The OPT programme allows students on F-1 visas to work for up to 12 months after graduation, with a 24-month extension for STEM courses. Notably, OPT has historically operated through executive rules rather than explicit legislation, making it vulnerable to legal and policy changes. The proposed bill aims to address this gap and provide statutory backing.

US Tariff Measures and Global Trade Concerns

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The United States, under the leadership of Donald Trump, has proposed and implemented new tariff measures on imports, aiming to protect domestic industries and reduce trade imbalances. These developments have triggered global reactions and raised concerns about their broader economic impact.

Key Developments

The tariff policy focuses on increasing duties on imported goods, particularly from major trading partners. While the objective is to boost domestic manufacturing and safeguard local jobs, such measures have led to uncertainty in global financial markets and heightened fears of economic slowdown.

Global Impact

The imposition of tariffs has the potential to disrupt global supply chains and increase the cost of goods, leading to inflationary pressures. It may also provoke retaliatory actions from affected countries, escalating into trade disputes and weakening the global trading system governed by the World Trade Organization.

Impact on Developing Economies

Developing countries, including India, may face challenges such as reduced export opportunities and declining global demand. However, in some cases, supply chain shifts may create new opportunities for alternative manufacturing hubs.

Additional Key Facts

Tariffs are taxes imposed on imports and can be classified as ad valorem (percentage-based) or specific (fixed). Recent developments reflect a shift towards protectionist policies, as seen earlier during the US-China Trade War. Such measures often lead to higher consumer prices and may slow down global economic growth.