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E P I S O D E 2

Playing for Change:

The Business of Online Gaming in India



The Online Gaming Industry in India has seen a raft of changes and is slated to be one of the fastest growing sectors in India. With close to 500 million games and 180 million people playing Fantasy sports, India also happens to be the largest Fantasy sports market in the world (as of April 2023)

Several market forces are at play here:

1. Young demographic of India with an interest in gaming
2. Cheap data and rising penetration of Internet / 5G
3. Influx of Funding over the years
4. Seamless digital payments infrastructure to reduce friction

Despite the promising forecasts, however, the industry has had a tough run since last year. Policy changes and governance have been limiting, particularly in the segment of Real Money Games (RMGs), with escalating taxes (tax burden has multiplied). Further still, with state-level authorities calling for a ban on online gaming, the social and economic projections of growth seem to be in a state of constant flux.

Gaming companies are afraid that the high tax burden that the GST Council has finally imposed will drive away interest, thereby reducing FDI inflows in this sector. More recently, there have been instances of even the most promising unicorns laying off staff in large numbers.

Methodology:

'Online Gaming' and 'Real Money gaming' were the foundational keywords on which the data from Brandwatch was analysed. 47% of our total dataset was with regard to Real Money Gaming.

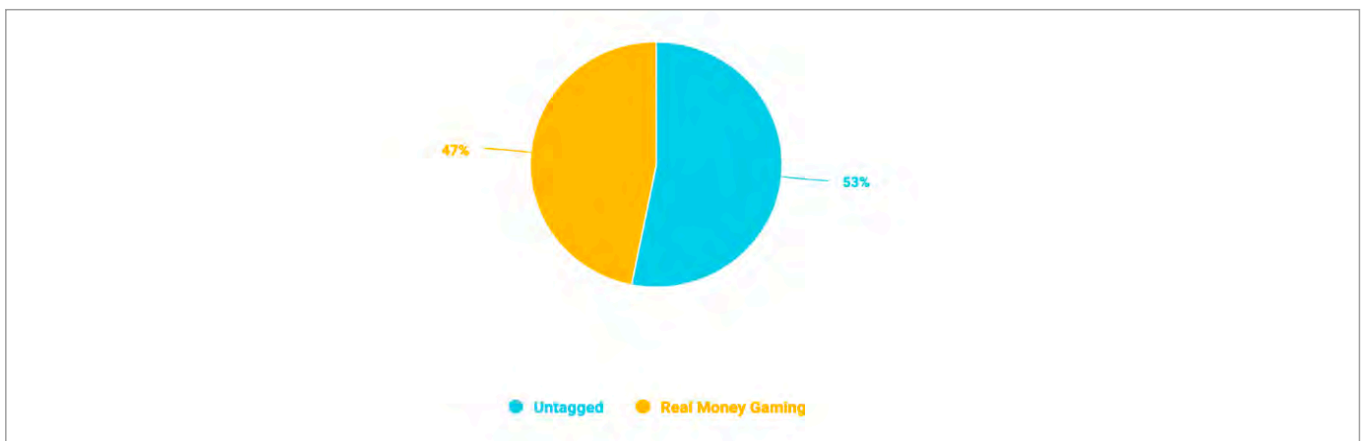
Scorecard

A state of play

We wanted to investigate the landscape and figure out what's going on by analyzing the news and twitter mentions. **Considering the fact that real money games contribute to 60% of all e-gaming revenue in India**, we have primarily focused on conversations pertaining to this category; with "Online Gaming " and "Real Money Games" being the foundational keywords for this analysis. Data privacy, mental health of players, money laundering, false advertising, a thriving black market, collection potential from taxes, and taxation itself - have all come under the scanner this year.

We have conducted a comprehensive examination of the current landscape, encompassing the GST policy decision debate, its impact on the industry, the evolution and controversies surrounding GST policy decisions, resulting consequences for firms and the industry, the influential think tanks and studies shaping decision-making, mental health and social challenges in India, and the safeguarding of gamers and the industry's future.

Real money gaming mentions



Key Insights | Online Gaming India | June 01, 2022 – Sep 24, 2023

Total Mentions

130.79 K

Unique Authors

41.14 K

Trending Topics

1. 28% GST on online gaming
2. GST Council
3. 30% TDS

In late 2022, Google Play changed its policy for [listing Real Money Games](#) on the Play Store in what one can call a watershed moment. Such games were to be made accessible to the wider public. In the run up to [completing a year](#) since then, the program continues to gain legitimacy.

Volume of mentions over time



Game Play: A detailed timeline of events

H. Jun 19, 2022	Meetings held by the GST Council regarding online gaming casinos & horse racing. Anticipating taxes being raised to 28%.
E. Nov 29, 2022	TN State Govt's ban on online gaming, specifically on rummy and poker.
G. Jan 02, 2023	Announcement of self regulatory bodies monitoring online gaming.
D. Apr 06, 2023	New rules by the government aim to regulate the sector and prohibit games involving betting and wagering .
A. Jul 12, 2023	GST raised to 28% leading to discussions online driven by @Ashneer_Grover on the government's tax policies .
C. Jul 21, 2023	Concerns expressed over high GST rate imposed, impacting industry negatively.
B. Aug 21, 2023	Voices across several stakeholders argue against the recent policy changes by appealing to the Govt .

Several journalists, media houses, founders and communication leaders rally this sentiment.

BJP4TamilNadu (BJP Tamilnadu) @BJP4TamilNadu

29 Nov

RT @annamalai_k The TN State Govt's drama of the ban on **Online gaming** (Rummy & Poker) needs to be exposed. Sept 26th: CM & Cabinet clears ordinance on ban on **online gaming**. Oct 3rd: TN govt passes ordinance banning online rummy & poker and introduced new regulations for **online gaming**. (1/4)

Ashneer Grover @AshneerGrover

RIP - Real money gaming industry in India. If the govt is thinking people will put in ₹100 to play on ₹72 pot entry (28% Gross GST); and if they win ₹54 (after platform fees)- they will pay 30% TDS on that - for which they will get free swimming pool in their living room come the first monsoon - not happening!

It was good fun being part of the fantasy gaming industry - which stands murdered now. \$10 Bn down the drain in this monsoon.

Time for startups Founders to enter politics and be represented - or this is going to be spate industry after industry.

Last edited 9:05 PM · Jul 11, 2023 · 3.8M Views

3,703 Retweets 702 Quotes 24.4K Likes 752 Bookmarks

Business Today @business.today

The investors group said in the letter that the tax burden will increase by 1,100% and make the online real money skill gaming business model "unviable". #onlinegaming #onlinegaminggst #onlinegamingindustry



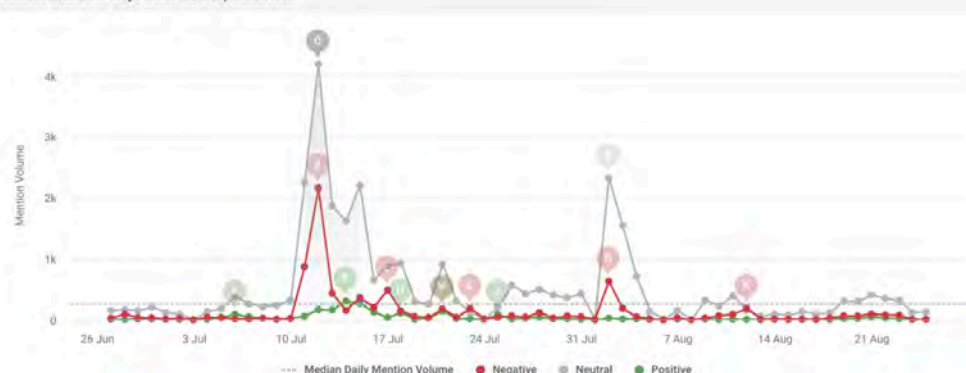
business today in Tiger Global, Peak XV, Steadview Capital, other investors ask govt to reconsider. Online gaming taxation: This comes after over 100 online gaming companies and industry associations approached the Centre last week, urging it to...

12:42 PM · Jul 21, 2023 · 933 Views

We have dug further to make sense of the sentiment towards such policy changes and determine if there was indeed a balanced perspective, we zoomed into the **data between July and August**.

Closer look at sentiment

Mention Volume for Days broken down by Sentiment



Timeline of key events

A. Jul 12, 2023

Concern regarding potential demise of the real money gaming industry in India due to high entry fees, taxes, and fees levied on winnings.

E. Jul 17, 2023

Criticism from the media on the 28% tax on the full value of deposits, instead of margins charged.

D. Aug 02, 2023

Opposition to 28% GST on Online Gaming by many entrepreneurs, investors, and other stakeholders.

Most of the data demonstrated **that audiences at large were not happy with the perceived outcomes of the Council Meeting** and were repeatedly appealing to the policymakers to consider their views.



tinucherian (Tinu Cherian Abraham) @tinucherian

12 Jul

RT @Ashneer_Grover RIP - Real money gaming industry in India. If the govt is thinking people will put in ₹100 to play on ₹72 pot entry (28% Gross GST); and if they win ₹54 (after platform fees)- they will pay 30% TDS on that - for which they will get free swimming pool in their living room come...

Taxation: TDS GST Tags: Real Money Gaming

Several concerns were raised regarding investment opportunities affected, job losses, total shutdown of operations and even livelihood of players being affected.

All of this culminated into a riot of regulations, market turbulence and legislative pursuits. Over the last months itself, amidst the taxation rules which have been termed as a “bloodbath”, we have seen [opportunistic consolidation](#) and [investments](#), [demonstrations against superstars](#) promoting

online gaming, landmark survey on whether [children are addicted to online gaming](#), asking for [parental consent](#) on these platforms, possibility that the govt [may shelve SRBs](#), the Supreme Court staying the High Court's judgment on quashing a [GST notice against GamesKraft](#), and the [DGGI issuing show cause notices](#) to 12 online Real Money Gaming companies over alleged tax dues in excess of Rs 55,000 crores.



livemint (Mint) @livemint

15 Jul

The industry said the new tax could hinder the #DigitalIndia Initiative and prime minister's vision, potentially leading to an increase in black market activities and criminal offences. (@VarunKhosla reports) Read here: <https://t.co/7jsbzrxe0> <https://t.co/mBk1nhyWgT>



RaushanRRajput (Raushan Raj Rajput) @RaushanRRajput

15 Jul

The 28% GST on online gaming in India is a hindrance to growth, innovation, and job creation. Let's stand together and #SupportOnlineGaming by advocating for a fair tax policy!

Taxation: GST



Rajibsingha_ (Rajib) @Rajibsingha_

15 Jul

Gaming has become a major contributor to the Indian economy, but unfair taxation policies could harm its potential. Let's advocate for tax policies that recognize the value and positive impact of online gaming in India. #OnlineGamingGST



rajeshsawhney (Rajesh Sawhney) @rajeshsawhney

15 Jul

Honeymoon period for Indian startups is decisively over. Regulatory squeeze by RBI coupled with Finance Ministry's announcements on GST on online gaming, TCS and angel tax, etc have big impacts on many startups, especially in Fintech and online gaming. Regulatory arbitrage...

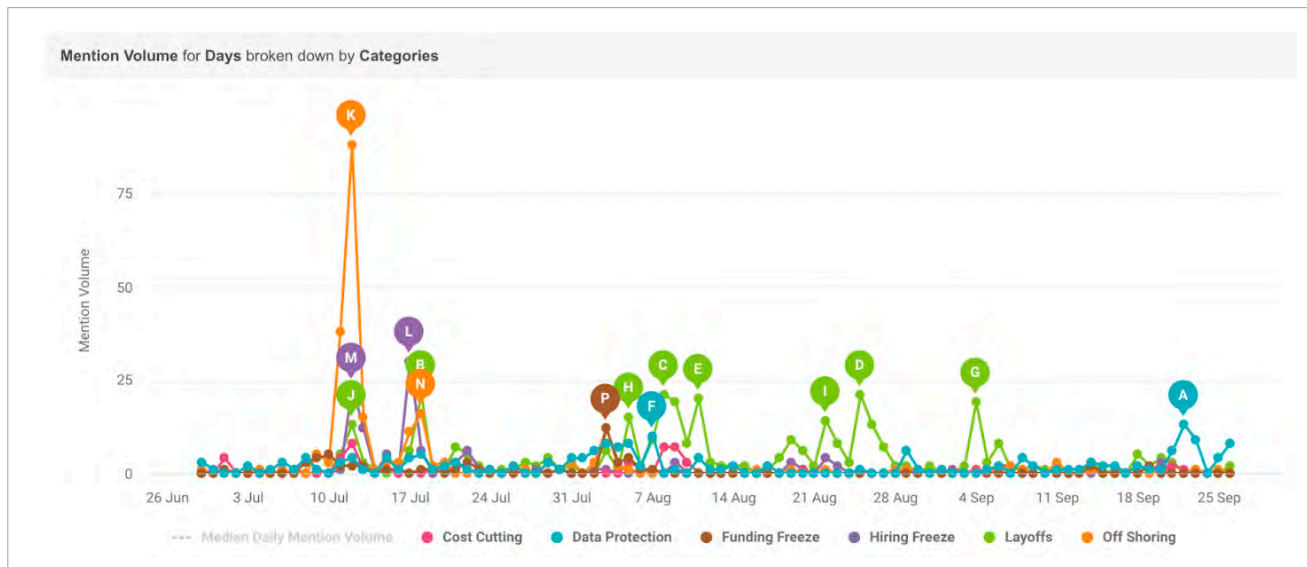
Retweets: 14 Replies: 23 Impressions: 226266 Reply Retweet Like Engage



We've mapped these concerns to reveal some of the most frequently cited potential problems as well as the after effects of such a policy being implemented.

We split the mentions by the number of times phrases and keywords like Funding Freeze, Cost Cutting, and Layoffs came up coupled with several other factors to identify emerging patterns.

Emerging negative themes



Initially the market was speaking about how such new taxation would be an organizing problem and simply affect future growth of the industry, the actual impact of this has escalated sharply.

Thought leaders were initially concerned about gaming companies moving offshore, the likelihood of an unregulated black market emerging stronger and both domestic and foreign investments falling. However, by the time the Council decided on the policy, news started to break on multiple layoffs by several gaming companies.

C. August 11 2023: The conversation was about the effect of a 28% GST on online gaming that has resulted in layoffs and shutdowns in the real money gaming industry. Companies like Mobile Premier League (MPL), Hike, and Quizy have laid off employees due to the additional tax burden.

D. Aug 25 2023: Three Indian startups have laid off staff and three other startups have shut down altogether after the GST Council refused to reconsider their decision. Layoff numbers include 350 employees at PlayMPL, 125 employees at Spartan Poker, and 55 employees at Rush Gaming.

Layoffs continue to dominate the negative conversations. [MPL](#), [Rush Gaming Universe](#) and [Spartan Poker](#) have all been in the highlights with layoff announcements between August 7th and Sept 11th.

We also tried to look for firms with the most mentions against these negative drivers. Although one mention can have multiple firms mentioned against them, a high frequency against a particular firm would unveil persistent problems in that space.

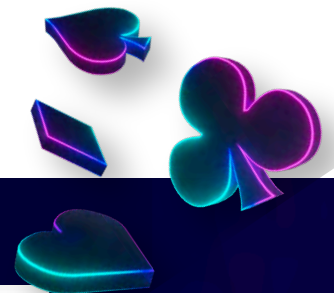
Deeper Dive: Drivers for negative mentions

	COST CUTTING	DATA PROTECTION	FUNDING FREEZE	HIRING FREEZE	LAYOFFS	OFFSHORING
WinZO	2	1	2	7	15	0
MPL	17	1	2	12	74	0
Zupee	0	1	1	5	1	0
Delta Corp	2	0	0	17	7	1
Paytm First Games	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baazi Games	0	0	0	2	0	1
onmobile global	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gameskraft	0	4	2	12	9	0
Dream11	5	3	4	2	2	0
99games	0	0	0	0	0	0
Games2win	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nazara Technologies	2	2	1	13	16	2

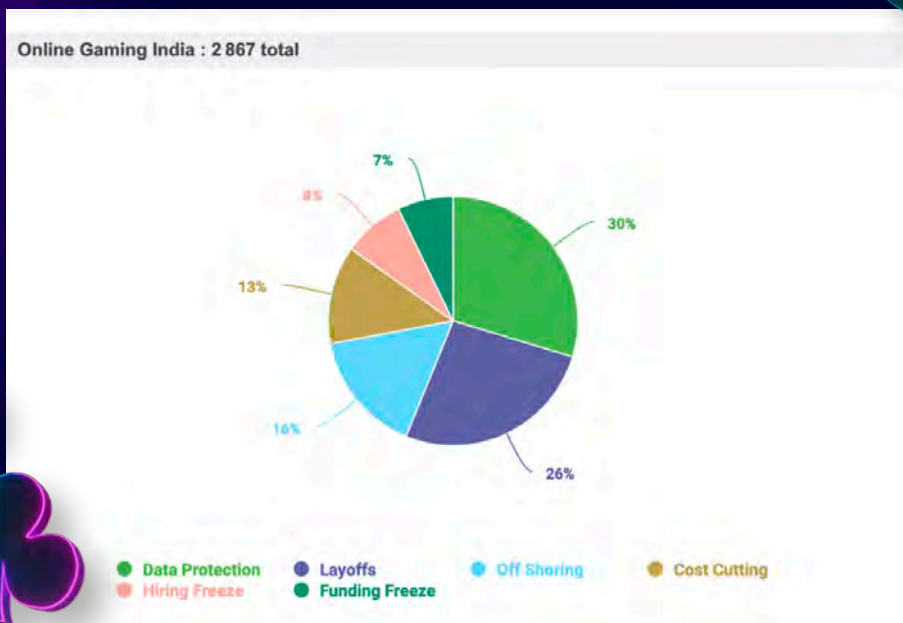
*Above Chart: Keywords and Themes for Period 1st July 2023 – 25th Aug 2023

WinZO, MPL and Nazara Technologies have been highlighted in mentions around layoffs. Delta, Zupee and Gameskraft on the other hand have been strongly called out regarding the hiring freeze.

Notably, conversations around Data Privacy and protection were high on the radar as the Govt, due to parliamentary discussions on the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2023.



Category wise breakdown of mentions



The League

Emerging themes for top companies

Some of the key firms mentioned with regard to online gaming and real money gaming that featured widely in recent news also featured Fantasy Sports, online rummy and casinos.

Some key themes do stand out for the top firms:

Dream11 has mentions of **success stories of individuals** who have won substantial amounts of money that went on to change their lives. Furthermore, they have **secured mentions as the jersey sponsor of the Indian Cricket Team** between 2023-2027.

MPL has been in the news largely due to **negative connotations**. In recent news, its **layoff of 350 people** from the company has been much discussed. Notably, the firm has also expanded into Africa through partnerships and identified UP, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Bihar and Rajasthan as growing markets.

Nazara has been in the news as one of the **listed firms along with Delta Corp.** (whose stocks were affected significantly with the news of the ban on online gaming in Tamil Nadu and announcements from the GST Council). Notably, it has since caught the attention of the press **as the white knight and cofounder of Zerodha, Nikhil Kamath invested Rs 100 Crore into Nazara** and shared his optimistic outlook towards the sector.

Gameskraft received a hefty tax notice for **alleged GST evasion** and was in the news due to multiple court battles on this front.

WinZO had filed a lawsuit against **Google** for allowing real-money games for fantasy sports and rummy on its platform. WinZO claimed that this decision was discriminatory. **WinZO was also in the news with its commitment to growth** allowing for a third round of ESOP liquidation.



Top companies featured in the news

	BAAZI GAMES	DELTA CORP	DREAM 11	GAMESKRAFT	MPL	NAZARA TECHNOLOGIES	WINZO	ZUPEE
indiatimes.com	8	39	150	137	178	125	110	76
newsdrum.in	1	2	2	48	3	44	50	43
livemint.com	2	18	50	23	52	32	48	7
businessworld.in	3	1	20	11	24	25	28	20
inc42.com	2	1	54	18	65	57	21	3
business-standard.com	4	6	12	24	13	20	21	8
outlookindia.com	1	22	17	17	23	20	19	7
afaqs.com	10	0	8	2	11	3	12	13
moneycontrol.com	3	41	21	8	27	42	11	5
yourstory.com	3	0	13	10	11	11	10	1
financialexpress.com	7	8	8	24	13	12	9	5
exchange4media.com	7	0	10	1	5	4	7	8
gadgetsnow.com	0	0	7	2	10	2	7	3
gadgets360.com	0	0	8	2	11	3	6	2
ndtv.com	0	2	10	7	11	5	6	6
theweek.in	0	0	1	5	0	5	6	4
bqprime.com	1	6	3	9	4	14	5	0
businesstoday.in	0	36	19	16	11	44	5	6
deccanherald.com	0	4	8	5	9	6	5	0
thehindubusinessline.com	0	7	10	13	8	17	5	2
forbesindia.com	3	1	8	0	7	6	4	0
technosports.co.in	5	0	2	2	12	2	4	8
theprint.in	0	13	13	4	8	12	4	2
indianexpress.com	0	4	10	8	13	5	3	1
investmentguruindia.com	1	8	5	1	9	16	3	0
news18.com	0	3	8	8	9	8	3	0
republicworld.com	0	9	4	3	4	8	3	3
thehindu.com	1	0	7	1	8	0	3	0
timesnownews.com	2	4	7	3	10	3	3	25
zeebiz.com	0	16	0	4	1	16	3	0
cnbctv18.com	1	14	4	7	1	16	2	1
hindustantimes.com	1	0	11	2	7	1	2	0
jagran.com	0	1	2	2	4	4	2	1
medianama.com	0	0	6	10	9	1	2	2
fortuneindia.com	2	5	2	4	4	17	0	0

Above: Mentions on top news publishers of Gaming companies. Jun 2022 - Sep 2023

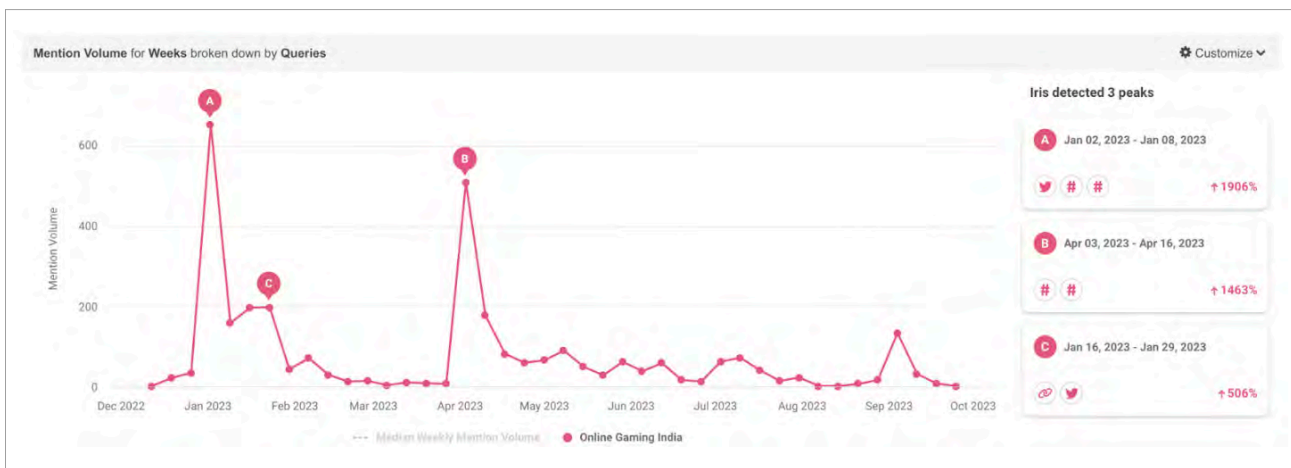
Third Umpire

Are Self Regulatory Organisations the much needed eyes in the sky?

Since the beginning of the year, there have been multiple conversations around self regulation. RMG companies, despite what seemed like the odds being stacked against them, have managed to survive in part because of their consistent communication highlighting the very real difference between games of skill and games of chance.

It has long been argued that a **self-regulatory approach would be necessary in keeping with some of the industry's unique challenges**, specifically from a user protection perspective. While this has been largely appreciated by the gaming companies, some evident challenges emerged from various stakeholder groups.

SROs in online gaming



Spotlight on key developments

A: AIGF welcomes the decision by MEITY to bring in an SRO-based approach to the Online Gaming Industry in India.

C: Experts and Policymakers push for the fact that a [common code of conduct](#) is necessary to ensure a common playing field.

B: Announcement that the Govt will allow for multiple SROs to regulate Online Gaming.



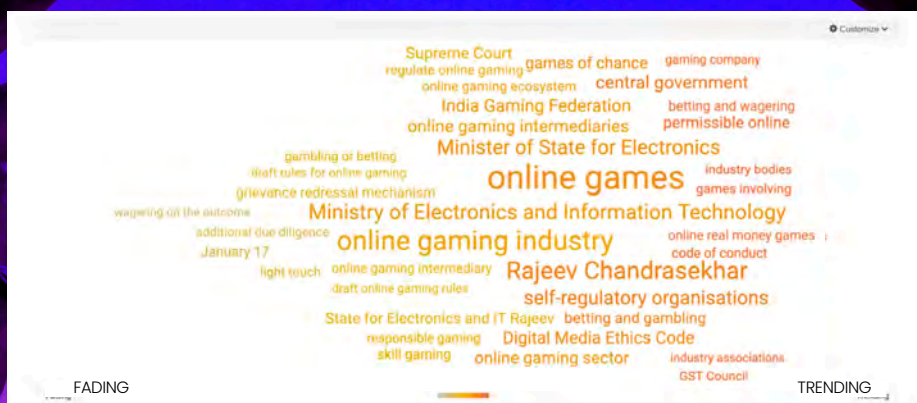
Controversy ensued when IMAI expressed its interest in taking up the task, in addition to its existing portfolio as the apex body of internet-based companies. **The allegations broadly lend to the idea that MEITY’s proposed model allows for “forum shopping” with more than one SRO in place. On the flipside, IMAI is often alleged to be siding with the interests of “Big Tech”, with operators such as Google and Meta representing them.**

Understandably, Indian online gaming companies did not feel their interests would align with that of the IMAI.

As of 10th July, the three SROs received by MEITY included the EPWA (Esports Players Welfare Association), the second consortium predominantly led by companies represented by industry body AIGF (All India Gaming Federation) and a third consortium of companies represented by EGF (E-Gaming Federation) and FIFS (Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports).

Despite [divisive](#) and [methodical opinions](#) to tackle the matter of regulation, it is clear that the opportunity for the industry is too big to pass up or risk stifling potential growth. That said, there is a clear need to have a transparent and clear set of guidelines and procedures even as multiple SROs are appointed for purposes of ensuring that the momentum of the industry is not permanently damaged. **The need to cater to the end user is of prime importance amidst all of this to ensure that [safety aspects of the consumer](#) are not compromised as millions of users begin to explore Real Money Gaming platforms.**

Trending topics over time



Even as the industry grapples on how to deal with the outcomes of a very high tax rate, the SROs are [bringing to light](#) some of the inequality of the industry as a whole.

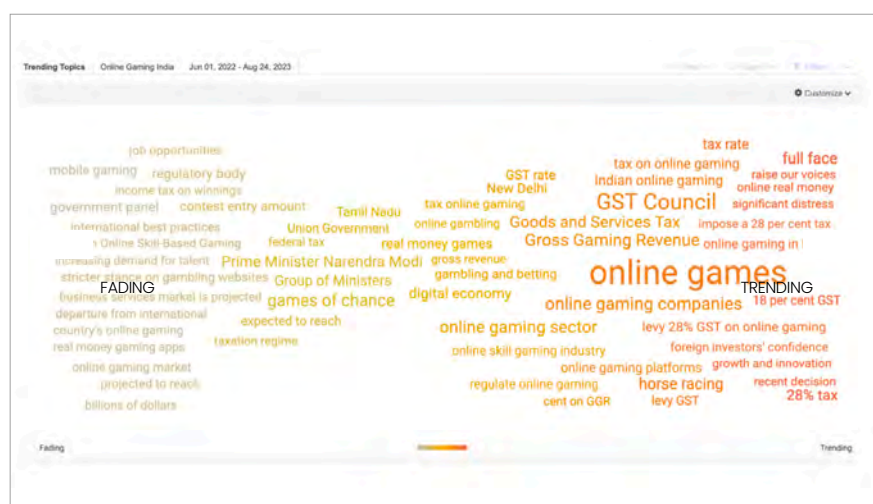
As of **Sep 4th**, Google announced that it will list all real money gaming platforms on the play store which have been approved by SRBs. The SROs await notification from the Govt and anticipate this to come through by the end of September.

Slip

Dwindling Investor Confidence?

Critics of the increased tax burden have cited reduced FDI inflows as a prominent short term outcome of the decision. With a light-touch self-regulation on one hand, and an increased tax burden on the other, the Govt [may have spooked investors](#) in this segment.

Emerging topics under investment



Thirty domestic and foreign investors including Tiger Global, Kalaari Capital, Peak XV Partners appealed to the Govt to reconsider its decision and estimated an adverse impact to the tune of at least \$4 Billion over the next 3-4 years.

Skeptics speculated that challenges will include layoffs, shutdowns and an eventual impact on cybersecurity, black market operations and associated fledgling sectors poised for growth such as the AVGC sector (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics).

Since the GST Council announcement, however, there have been few notable mentions in this space. However, it is **believed that the industry is [eagerly hoping for a change in the stance of the Govt on taxation](#)**. The only recent article covering FDI perspectives have come from the [Broadband Internet Forum](#) citing concerns on the **growth potential for 5G being affected as a direct outcome of the increased tax burden**.

That said, and despite the trouble brewing on the taxation front, a wave of consolidation is anticipated as the regulatory environment results in a shake out of several operators in this space. **Nitin Kamath's investment into Nazara is a case in point about smart investors believing in the long term prospects of this industry.**

Extra Life

Safeguarding player health and wellbeing

Deep dive into conversations related to impact of online gaming on health and well-being let us to categorize the mentions under four major topics: addiction, suicide, debt and depression.

Negative consequences of online gaming addiction such as severe tremors, violent behavior, loss of money, and even criminal activities (kidnapping, ransom demands and even murder) have come to light. There has to

be a greater focus on the need for regulations to combat addiction and protect users from harm. We further segregated the data to investigate these issues and observe if there is a correlation in the data we get from specific states.

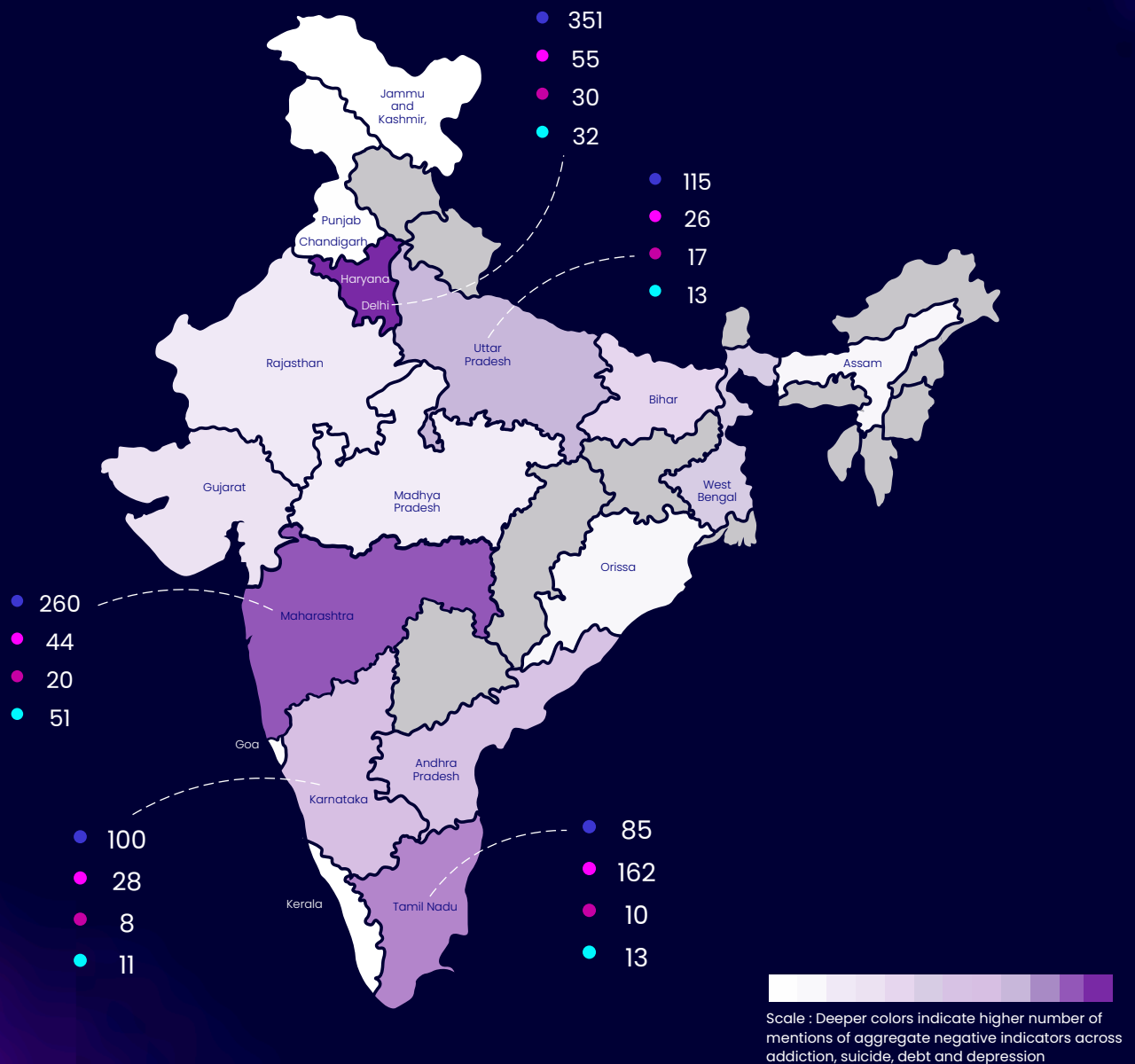
Tamil Nadu banned online gaming after many people allegedly committed suicide following monetary losses.

Breakup of health & social impact



8% of the 130,000 mentions were related to addiction, suicide, depression and debt.

We wanted to investigate how these issues stack up in social mentions and whether there's correlation in the data that we get from specific states. From the analysis we have observed that Delhi has the most mentions regarding all issues, followed by Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and UP



	AP	AS	BR	CH	DELHI	GA	GJ	HR	J & K	KA	KL	MP	MH	OD	PB	RJ	TN	UP	WB
Addiction	100	18	25	13	351	9	52	41	9	100	3	34	260	16	11	42	85	115	38
Suicide	22	3	64	1	55	1	5	3	0	28	3	4	44	6	0	2	162	26	17
Depression	10	6	4	4	30	0	11	9	2	8	2	4	20	2	1	10	10	17	7
Debt	9	0	1	0	32	4	2	1	0	11	1	6	51	1	0	2	13	13	63

Above: Table indicates social issues emerging across various states

We can observe that the states said to be growing a user base rapidly, are also the same from where tweets about these particular issues have originated.

Severe effects of Online Gaming involving money have also been reported from across [Rural India](#). **Most incidents of suicides or serious harm seem to have stemmed from debt.**

Serious health complications have also been reported among children. A [recent story from Rajasthan](#) highlighted the physical and mental impact on children due to addiction to online gaming.

Unfortunately, most voices speaking currently seem to be justifying the increase in taxes as a deterrent to suicides as opposed to asking for reform in the selection of addictive and harmful games in the first place.

[#WATCH](#) | Rajasthan | Case study of a child in Alwar who is suffering from severe tremors after being addicted to online gaming.

Special Teacher Bhavani Sharma says, "A child has come to our special school. As per our assessment and the statements of his relatives, he is a victim of games like Free Fire. The child lost in the game. The game is such that if a player loses, they are unable to tolerate it - they either die by suicide or lose their mental balance. This child too has lost his mental balance...We have prepared a format of sports activities for the child and as per that we have to help the child win all of them so that he overcomes the fear of loss and remembers his victory."



2:31 PM · Jul 12, 2023 · 767.2K Views

1,590 Reposts 260 Quotes 4,092 Likes 671 Bookmarks

[Rajesh Surana](#) 
@rajsuranaNCIB

Celebrated [#IndependenceDay2023](#) with school children. We made children aware about the side effects of online gaming and smartphones and de-addiction. 🇮🇳 Jai Hind!

[@NCIBMP](#) [@DGNCIB](#) [@PMOIndia](#) [@HMOIndia](#) [@GovernorMP](#)
[@CMMadhyaPradesh](#) [@mohdept](#) [@DGP_MP](#) [@ips_kmak](#) [@CMandsaur](#)
[@pronicibup](#)



8:50 PM · Aug 16, 2023 · 313 Views

8 Reposts 11 Likes

Awareness drives in schools have been conducted to make children aware of the harmful effects of online gaming.

RuleBook

Ensuring Fair Play

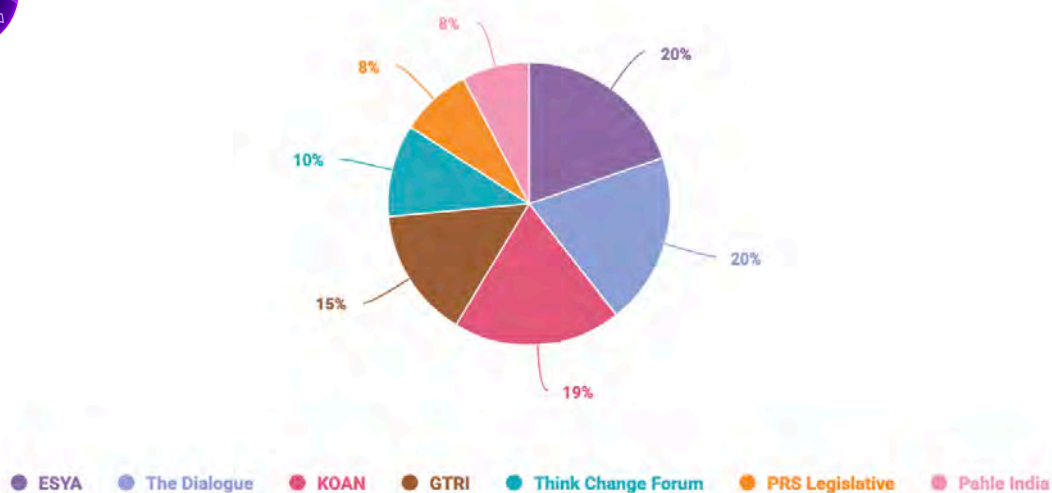
Investigating the impact of think tanks and studies was a critical component in our report as they form the foundations of policy making.

Given that the sector is rapidly undergoing significant changes and policy changes in technology related sectors are anticipated, we wanted to identify some of the most pressing issues here.

Besides NITI Aayog, the following organizations were frequently mentioned in this topic. There were **206 mentions** of these organizations in our data.

Of these, **GTRI and PRS legislative had mentions more specifically focussed on GST**, and hence we eliminated them from our drill down insights; and mapped specific topics to the remaining Think Tanks mentioned.

Share of voice of think tanks



The below table indicates the participation of various think tanks when it comes to social issues and how it impacts policies in this industry.

	ADDICTION	ADVERTISING	BANS AND FRAUD	DATA PRIVACY	LAUNDERING	LIGHT TOUCH	PREVENT CHILDREN	PREVENTIVE ALGORITHMS	SELF REGULATORY BODIES	USER VERIFICATION
ESYA	10	7	13	1	1	2	3	0	21	0
Think Change Forum	0	7	11	0	0	1	0	8	2	0
KOAN	10	26	15	1	4	8	0	0	23	1
Pahle India	1	5	6	5	5	7	0	0	9	0
The Dialogue	7	19	3	1	0	1	0	0	10	4

While there is enough focus on incremental changes to the ecosystem that allow for online gaming to thrive, there is room to consider how new protocols can be implemented to prevent harm and misuse of the said platforms.

Measures that can be implemented in this direction include limiting spends on in-app purchases, improving KYC features to detect young players, and tracking behavioral trends in cases where a string of losing bets are placed and losses suffered on a single platform (without being intrusive). Stress tests akin to banks can be put in place to keep

things in check. However, many companies may still consider such measures counter to their interests.

While some progressive recommendations such as preventive algorithms have been mentioned, as the understanding of this ecosystem becomes more apparent, the hope is that these control systems will be adopted with consumer safety as top-of-mind priority to prevent exploitation and abuse of gamers.

Hot Reads in this segment

- [NEW-AGE DIGITAL CONSUMPTION IN INDIA](#)
- [ROADMAP FOR A FUTURE-READY DIGITAL INDIA ACT](#)
- [OFFSHORE ONLINE BETTING AND GAMBLING IN INDIA](#)
- [GAME ON!](#)

Hot off the Press

What is happening now?

6th October:

In a recent spate of summons issued by the Enforcement Directorate of India, several celebrities have been caught off guard due to their involvement with Mahadev App. While this is not strictly an Indian entity and operated offshore from the UAE, this signals a trend that has been formerly highlighted as a risk by several voices from within the industry.

Notably, these celebrities are under the scanner related with regard to possibly promoting a bunch of similar apps operating as a laundering front under the guise of a Poker or Rummy gaming app.

Our trackers witnessed a significant rise in mentions around promotions and advertising and laundering over the past few days in light of the increased reporting around these issues.

Actor Ranbir Kapoor, comedian Kapil Sharma, actress Huma Qureshi and Hina Khan are some of the celebrities who have reportedly been summoned in connection with the [Mahadev Betting App](#). The promoters of the app, operating out of Dubai, spent lavishly on a wedding attended by several other well known celebrities who have come under the scanner..

Addiction, advertising and bans over one month



A Toss up

What happens next?

Cheap data, access to computing power on mobile phones and digital payments will continue to drive up the potential for online gaming in India. The health and social consequences of gaming will continue to be a challenge that a young India grapples with, regardless of whether these games involve money or not.

On the flip side, there are documented stories of people considering gaming as a serious [career option](#). **Two-thirds of serious gamers would consider doing this full time or part time to earn money.**

The complications get amplified with Games that would involve money. However, there have been several success stories here as well. Consider the Story of professional Poker Player

[Muskaan](#) and her claim to fame. **As of Nov 2022, 56% Women Gamers were said to consider gaming as a career option.**

It remains to be seen how the story of Online Gaming unfolds. However, with some steps in the right direction, and with a balanced view of a segment that does have its benefits, the government will need to put user safety at the center of its policymaking.

Like in any game, there will always be winners as well as losers but with the right policy impetus from the government, and with reasonable checks and balances, it is hoped that online gaming in the country will be able to thrive in an ecosystem that is capable of contributing to the growth of the nation.



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