

Gaming Gets Its Independence To Dominate The World

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Article Content:

This August, in his 78th Independence Day address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a vision aimed at positioning India at the forefront of the global gaming industry. His idea on 'Design in India, Design for the World,' is a clarion call for the nation's youth to harness the wealth of India's cultural heritage and transform it into innovative, world-class gaming products. This initiative aims to inspire pride in India's indigenous capabilities and establish the country as a global leader in the creative industry.

According to the latest report by Primus Partners, revenue of the online gaming market in India is expected to reach USD 2.4 billion by FY2029, with its share in GDP seeing a growth of 27.5 per cent CAGR between 2019 and 2022. Interestingly, the report revealed that the female workforce expansion outpaced overall growth in workforce in the sector, achieving an impressive 103.15 per cent CAGR. This trend not only reflects the industry's rapid development but also highlights its contribution to gender diversity and women's economic empowerment in the technology sector.

Gaming constitutes a crucial component of the broader AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics) industry worldwide, with online gaming expected to contribute up to 68 per cent of the total revenue generated by the AVGC sector in India by 2026. With its rich ancient wisdom and literary masterpieces, India is uniquely positioned to leverage its heritage for modern innovation across AVGC. The Prime Minister's vision emphasises the importance of this cultural wealth, urging Indian youth to channel their creativity into the design and development of products that not only cater to domestic needs but also appeal to international markets. This approach not only encourages national pride but also highlights the global potential of India's creative industries, particularly in the sunrise Indian gaming sector.

By producing games that reflect Indian values and narratives, the nation has the opportunity to offer the world a fresh and unique perspective. This initiative can help drive economic development, creating new employment opportunities and fostering innovation. The development of Indian-designed games that are competitive in international markets can serve as a testament to the country's creative prowess and cultural richness.

Furthermore, these games would act as cultural ambassadors, showcasing India's rich and diverse

heritage to an international audience. This cultural export not only promotes a deeper appreciation for Indian culture but also helps to build soft power on the global stage. In an era where cultural influence is as significant as economic might, India's foray into the global gaming market could enhance its standing and influence worldwide. The popular game 'Age of Empires', rooted in different eras of history, from the Stone Age in 'Age of Empires I' to the colonial period in 'Age of Empires III' became a cult favourite worldwide. Indian game developers can draw inspiration from this approach to create games that traverse various epochs of India's rich history, beginning with the ancient Ashokan period and extending through to the Mughal era.

Skill-based games enhance cognitive abilities and a sense of competitiveness which will further boost the country's reputation of having skilled resources who not only bring competitive edge to the country but will fuel the global economic growth.

PM Modi's vision for Indian gaming is ambitious and forward-thinking. He sees beyond mere participation in the global market, envisioning India taking a leading role in both the creation and consumption of games. This vision is grounded in the belief that Indian professionals possess the talent and creativity required to develop games that resonate globally, drawing from the country's unique cultural narratives.

The economic benefits of this initiative are substantial. The global gaming market is projected to reach over USD 500 billion by 2030, and India's share in this market could significantly boost its economy. Presently, India's gaming sector accounts for merely 1.1 per cent of the global gaming revenue. The creation of high-quality, culturally relevant games would not only generate revenue but also create a myriad of job opportunities, in areas such as game development, animation, storytelling and marketing.

To realise the Prime Minister's vision of positioning India at the forefront of the global gaming industry, fostering public-private partnerships is essential. By establishing the right collaborations, India can provide the necessary funding, resources and expertise to support the development of high-quality, culturally relevant games. Joint ventures and funding initiatives can nurture startups and homegrown game developers, while workshops and training programs can help upskill aspiring game developers. Facilitating access to advanced technologies and infrastructure through these partnerships will enable Indian developers to create innovative gaming products that resonate globally.

Most importantly, implementing supportive policies and incentives will help catalyse the growth of the Indian gaming industry while weeding out illegal and unregistered offshore gaming industry, which not only deprive the country of its legitimate tax revenues, but put the citizens at safety risk. Financial incentives such as tax breaks, subsidies and grants for game development projects that align with the 'Design in India, Design for the World' vision can significantly boost the sector. Simplifying regulatory processes will make it easier for the existing gaming companies to thrive and contribute to higher taxes and employment opportunities, and new gaming companies to enter the market and boost FDI.

Promoting cultural and competitive narratives in gaming by encouraging developers to create content that reflects India's rich cultural heritage, historical events and mythological stories, and increase the cognitive and competitive skills, will uniquely position the Indian games and gaming industry in the global market.

Competitions, funding and mentorship programs focused on Indian themes, in collaboration with historians and cultural experts, will ensure accurate and respectful representations, thus enhancing India's cultural influence and economic growth in the gaming industry.