

Inform

# Year In Review 2025: Sports Law



The latest edition of the 'Inform: Sports Law' publication endeavours to provide a synopsis of key developments in sports, esports, and gaming laws in India and across the world, as well as to engage with stakeholders in these fields.

- 19 Billion USD - India's sports industry is currently estimated at.
- 85 Percentage of the sports economy contributed by Cricket.
- 45 Number of recognised NSFs.
- 1 Ranking in global doping violations.

# The Recap

## Landmark legislation bans online money games

The enactment of the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, has caused ripples across the Indian online gaming industry, which relies heavily on real-money games. Offering, aiding, abetting, inducing, or otherwise...

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## Reforms in sports governance

In a landmark move, India has enacted the National Sports Governance Act, 2025, to streamline governance, promote fair play, and elevate India's sporting ambitions. The Act, inter alia, provides for the establishment of a National Sports...

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## Amendments to anti-doping law

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Act, 2025, which received the President's assent on August 18, seeks to streamline the 2022 Act by aligning it with global best practices and the World Anti-Doping Code, particularly by incorporating...

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## New policy aims to position India as a global sporting powerhouse

In a turning point for Indian sport, the Union Cabinet approved the National Sports Policy, 2025, on July 1, 2025. The new policy, which supersedes the National Sports Policy of 2001, aims to position India as a global sporting...

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### **Indian football governance: AIFF adopts SC-approved constitution**

After the Supreme Court approved the draft Constitution in September this year, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) adopted it in its entirety on October 12, excluding two contentious clauses pending the Court's...

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### **Trump's ban on trans athletes in women's sports faces legal challenges**

President Donald Trump's executive order on February 5, 2025, barring transgender women from participating in women's sports, has ignited significant legal and policy debates. The executive order titled Keeping...

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### **ECJ allows EU courts to review CAS decisions for compliance with EU law**

In a landmark ruling, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) held that national courts within the European Union (EU) may review decisions of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) to ensure they align with fundamental principles...

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### **GRC doesn't make trans women legally female under EA 2010**

In a judgment dated April 16, 2025, the UK Supreme Court ruled that under the Equality Act 2010, the term "woman" refers to a biological woman, and that holding a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) does not change a...

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### **Jannik Sinner settles doping row with three-month suspension**

Earlier this year, World No. 1 tennis player Jannik Sinner accepted a three-month suspension after testing positive for the banned substance clostebol during the 2024 Indian Wells tournament. The decision sparked...

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### **Publication of athletes' doping details may breach GDPR**

In a matter referred for a preliminary ruling to the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) by the Federal Administrative Court, Austria, the opinion shared by Advocate General Spielmann addresses a relevant...

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# The Year Ahead: 2026

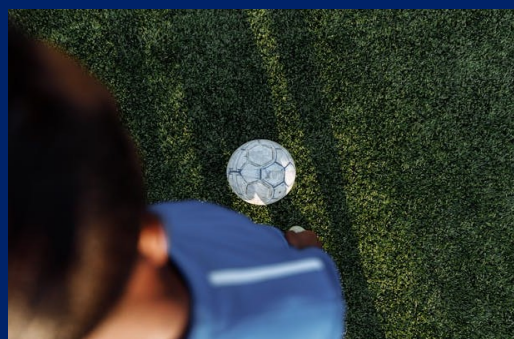


## Operationalisation of the sports governance framework

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has released three sets of draft rules formulated to facilitate the implementation of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025, which was enacted in August this year. The draft rules set out the composition of the general body and executive committee, election procedures, and disqualification criteria for members of National Sports Bodies; prescribe the structure, functions, and composition of the National Sports Board; and define the institutional framework of the National Sports Tribunal, governing the appointment, tenure, and service conditions of the chairperson, members, and staff. The provisions of the Act are yet to come into force, and stakeholder feedback on the draft rules was invited until November 14. Further details on the framework remain awaited.

## ISL deadlock deepens uncertainty in Indian football

Indian football is in crisis as the Indian Super League (ISL) faces a deadlock after the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) commercial rights tender ended without a single bidder, leaving the season suspended and clubs in limbo. The failed tender — intended to secure a new commercial partner ahead of the Master Rights Agreement's expiration in December 2025 — has prompted government- and Supreme Court-supervised intervention. Discussions are ongoing as stakeholders seek clarity in the days ahead.



## Online gaming laws are yet to come into force

Notably, the provisions of the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, are yet to come into force. Approximately two months after the Act's enactment, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology released draft rules setting out the procedural framework for its implementation. The draft rules, inter alia, outline the powers and functions of the Online Gaming Authority of India and provide for the registration of online social games and e-sports with the Authority. Stakeholder feedback on the draft rules was invited until October 31. More information on the framework and the pending Supreme Court case is awaited.

## IOC decision on transgender athletes' eligibility

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is expected to unveil the eligibility criteria for transgender athletes early next year. The Committee is said to be approaching a comprehensive ban on transgender women competing in female categories across all sports.

## Code against age fraud to be finalised

Recognising the threat that age fraud poses to sportsmanship and competition integrity, the Department of Sports has unveiled a draft framework proposing to revise the National Code Against Age Fraud in Sports, 2010. Key features of the draft Code include mandatory age verification, medical examinations to verify age discrepancies, a whistleblower mechanism, an amnesty programme for self-disclosure, and a comprehensive monitoring framework, among others. Public comments were invited until April 14; any further action on the draft may materialise in 2026.



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