

Game, Set & Match Monthly

Gaming and Sports Law Newsletter (June 2026)

GAMING NEWS UPDATE

1. GAMESKRAFT ED RAID AND KARNATAKA HC RELIEF

The Karnataka High Court has granted interim relief in the challenge arising from the ED's PMLA action against Gameskraft, a development tied to proceedings involving ₹526 crore. The matter sits at the intersection of enforcement powers, asset protection, and the regulatory uncertainty facing online gaming businesses in India. The significance goes beyond the immediate dispute. Cases like this can affect how gaming companies structure operations, manage compliance risk, and respond to investigative action, especially in a sector where

the legal treatment of gaming formats continues to evolve. Interim relief also matters because it may temporarily alter the enforcement landscape while the underlying legal issues remain unresolved. From a market perspective, the order is relevant because it reinforces that online gaming remains under intense scrutiny, and that regulatory or enforcement action can have direct commercial consequences. This case is another reminder that gaming law in India is still highly sensitive to litigation risk and state-level as well as central enforcement pressure.

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SPORTS NEWS UPDATE

1. DELHI HIGH COURT REAFFIRMS AITA GENERAL BODY'S SUPREMACY, ORDERS TIME-BOUND CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND FRESH ELECTIONS

The Delhi High Court has reaffirmed that the General Body of the All India Tennis Association (AITA) is the ultimate authority in deciding amendments to the federation's constitution and bye-laws. The Court directed that all proposed reforms be placed before the General Body for clause-by-clause discussion and voting at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to be held by July 31, 2026.

The order was passed by a Division Bench comprising Justices Tejas Karia and Madhu Jain while hearing cross-appeals filed by AITA and former Davis Cup player Somdev Devvarman against an earlier judgment concerning the federation's governance and elections. The dispute stems from challenges to AITA's September 2024 elections and its compliance with the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 and the National Sports Governance Rules, 2026.

The Court directed court-appointed administrator, former Chief Justice Gita Mittal, to finalise proposed constitutional amendments after

considering suggestions from the Interim Executive Committee.

Following the constitutional amendments, the Court ordered that fresh elections to AITA's Executive Committee be conducted on or before September 30, 2026 under the revised constitutional framework. The Court also dispensed with the minimum notice requirements under AITA's existing constitution in light of the urgency of complying with the new sports governance regime and concerns expressed by the International Tennis Federation (ITF). The ITF had sought clarity on AITA's governance status and compliance timelines, raising concerns about the risk of international repercussions if reforms were delayed.

[Read more here](#)

2. DELHI HIGH COURT DECLINES TO INTERFERE WITH SELECTION OF INDIAN DRESSAGE TEAM FOR 20TH ASIAN GAMES

The Delhi High Court ("DHC") has upheld the selection of the Indian Dressage Team for the 20th Asian Games, holding that the Equestrian Federation of India ("EFI") conducted the selection process in accordance with the prescribed Selection Criteria Version 4.0. The DHC reiterated that judicial review in matters of sports selection is confined to

examining the legality of the decision-making process and does not extend to substituting the Court's assessment for that of an expert selection body.

The petitioners, who had been placed on the reserve list, challenged the selection process, alleging that EFI had incorrectly assessed the Minimum Eligibility Requirements, miscalculated the comparative rankings, improperly excluded a qualifying score and acted in a biased manner. Rejecting these contentions, the DHC held that the Selection Criteria had been correctly applied and that the Selection Committee had objectively evaluated the competing horse-rider combinations. Finding no arbitrariness, irrationality, procedural impropriety or bias in the selection process, the DHC dismissed both writ petitions.

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3. MANIKA BATRA ALLEGES TTFI VIOLATED ITS CONSTITUTION IN ASIAN GAMES SELECTION, WITHDRAWS FROM FIGHT

Manika Batra has accused the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) of breaching its own constitution during the selection process for the 2026 Asian Games squad. Despite her objections, Batra stated that she is “mentally exhausted” and will no longer pursue the matter, choosing instead to focus on her participation in the WTT United States Smash 2026 tournament.

The controversy arose after Batra, a bronze medallist at the 2018 Asian Games and three-time Commonwealth Games gold medallist, was named only as a reserve for the Indian team. Seeking an explanation, she received a response from TTFI stating that a nine-member selection committee had chosen the squad in accordance with the rules. However, Batra contends that Article 24(C)(j) of the TTFI Constitution expressly limits any sub-committee to a maximum of seven members. She questioned how a nine-member committee could validly determine the team while the federation simultaneously claimed full compliance with its constitutional provisions.

Batra had earlier also challenged the criteria used for selection. She pointed out that she is currently ranked World No. 51, only three ranking points behind the world No. 50 player, and questioned the

period of performance considered by the selectors and whether such a marginal ranking difference justified her exclusion from the main squad.

According to TTFI's selection policy, players ranked within the world's top 50 automatically qualified for the Asian Games team. The remaining places were determined through a formula that considered international rankings, national rankings and the discretion of the selection committee.

[Read more here](#)

4. AIFF PROPOSES RENAMING TO 'FOOTBALL FEDERATION OF BHARAT', ANNOUNCES KEY REFORMS AND SEPTEMBER START FOR ISL

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has proposed changing its name to the Football Federation of Bharat (FFB), a move that was approved by its General Body and will now be sent to the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports for final approval. The federation cited examples of countries such as Türkiye and Czechia, which have adopted local nomenclature internationally, as part of the rationale behind the proposed rebranding.

At a Special General Meeting (SGM), the AIFF also announced that the 2026-27 season of the Indian Super League (ISL) will commence on September 04, 2026. However, the federation did not take a final decision on the structure and governance model of the league. Discussions continue regarding a proposed club-led model, under which ISL clubs would assume a greater role in the commercial and operational management of the league, with the matter being left to the managing committee for further deliberation.

The General Body also approved a revised AIFF Constitution to align the federation's governance framework with the requirements of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.

[Read more here](#)

5. INDIA TARGETS FORMULA ONE RETURN BY 2028, SPORTS MINISTRY TO ESTABLISH DEDICATED TASK FORCE

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has initiated efforts to bring Formula One (F1) back to India, with the government setting an ambitious target of hosting a Grand Prix by 2028, nearly 15

years after the last Indian Grand Prix was held at the Buddh International Circuit (BIC) in Greater Noida in 2013. To facilitate this objective, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya announced that the Ministry will constitute a dedicated task force to examine the feasibility of hosting major motorsport events in the country.

The decision follows a meeting between Ministry officials and various stakeholders, including representatives of Formula One, the owners of the Buddh International Circuit, the Adani Group, the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI), and current and former racing drivers and motorsport enthusiasts.

The proposed task force, expected to comprise representatives from the Sports Ministry, FMSCI, the relevant state government, and facility owners, will undertake a comprehensive assessment of India's motorsport ecosystem. Its mandate will include evaluating the economic, tourism, investment, and international benefits of hosting Formula One and other major motorsport events, while also identifying the infrastructure, operational requirements, and policy measures necessary for sustainable development of the sector. The task force is expected to submit its recommendations within three months of commencing operations.

[Read more here](#)

6. SPORTS MINISTRY PROPOSES AMENDMENTS TO NATIONAL ANTI-DOPING ACT TO CRIMINALISE ORGANISED DOPING ACTIVITIES

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has published for public consultation proposed amendments to the National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 ("**Anti-Doping Act**") to strengthen India's anti-doping framework by introducing criminal penalties for organised doping-related activities ("**Proposed Amendments**"). The Proposed Amendments seek to target traffickers, illegal suppliers, organised syndicates and unscrupulous support personnel involved in doping, while ensuring that athletes are not criminalised merely for anti-doping rule violations or positive tests. Anti-doping rule violations by athletes will continue to be dealt with under the existing anti-doping framework unless they are involved in the proposed criminal offences.

The Proposed Amendments insert a new Chapter VIA titled "Offences and Penalties" into the Anti-Doping Act. The Proposed Amendments prescribes imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to ₹2 lakh for offences such as trafficking, unauthorised sale, supply, administration and commercial distribution of prohibited substances or methods for doping purposes. Enhanced penalties of up to ten years' imprisonment and fines of up to ₹5 lakh are proposed for offences involving minors or organised crime syndicates. The Proposed Amendments also propose penalties for advertisements promoting prohibited substances, introduce corporate criminal liability for companies and responsible officers, and provide safeguards for athletes with valid Therapeutic Use Exemptions and bona fide medical practitioners acting in emergency medical situations.

Stakeholder comments on the Proposed Amendments were invited until June 18, 2026.

[Read more here](#)

7. CRICKET CANADA SUSPENDED BY ICC OVER GOVERNANCE FAILURES AND GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE CONCERNS

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has suspended Cricket Canada with immediate effect due to serious governance deficiencies, financial concerns and issues relating to government interference in the administration of the sport. The suspension follows a prolonged period of instability within Cricket Canada, including disputes over elections, questions regarding its governance structure and concerns over its ability to function as an independent and effective national federation.

According to reports, the ICC determined that Cricket Canada had failed to meet several obligations under the ICC's membership criteria and governance standards. The suspension means that Cricket Canada will lose its rights and privileges as an ICC member, including access to ICC funding and participation in certain ICC activities until it demonstrates compliance with the required governance and administrative standards.

The ICC has indicated that Cricket Canada can be reinstated if it undertakes comprehensive governance reforms and satisfies the conditions imposed by the governing body. These reforms are

expected to include improvements in financial management, governance processes, and the conduct of transparent and independent elections.

[Read more here](#)

8. CAS UPHOLDS FIFA SANCTIONS AGAINST MEXICO FOR HOMOPHOBIC CHANTS BUT OVERTURNS STADIUM CLOSURE PENALTY

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has partially upheld sanctions imposed by FIFA on the Mexican Football Federation (FMF) over the repeated use of a homophobic chant by Mexican supporters during international matches. However, CAS overturned FIFA's order requiring Mexico to play one match behind closed doors, concluding that the stadium closure was disproportionate in the circumstances.

The case arose from discriminatory chants by Mexican fans during the CONCACAF Nations League semi-final against the Canadian Soccer Association in March 2026. FIFA had imposed a fine of approximately CHF 100,000 (around USD 125,000) and ordered Mexico to play one home match without spectators as part of its disciplinary sanctions. The FMF appealed the decision before CAS.

In its ruling, CAS agreed with FIFA's finding that the chant constituted discriminatory conduct and that the Mexican federation bore responsibility for the behaviour of its supporters under FIFA's disciplinary framework. The tribunal therefore upheld the financial penalty and reaffirmed the principle that national associations can be held liable for discriminatory acts committed by their fans, even where the federation itself did not directly engage in the conduct.

However, CAS set aside the stadium closure sanction, finding that FIFA had not sufficiently justified why a behind-closed-doors match was necessary and proportionate in addition to the monetary fine.

[Read more here](#)

9. IOC STRENGTHENS OLYMPIC CHARTER'S POLITICAL NEUTRALITY PROVISIONS AMID DEBATE OVER RUSSIA'S RETURN TO INTERNATIONAL SPORT

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) approved significant amendments to the Olympic Charter aimed at reinforcing the principle of political neutrality in sport. The amendments strengthen the language emphasising that sport must remain free from political interference and expressly recognise the IOC's role in ensuring neutrality "at all times, free from governmental, cultural, societal or economic pressure."

The reforms were adopted as part of the IOC's broader "Fit for the Future" agenda and are intended to protect athletes and sporting competitions from external influence and prevent the Olympic Games from being used for political purposes.

The amendments have drawn particular attention because of their potential implications for the eventual return of Russian athletes and sports bodies to full participation in international sport. Critics argue that strengthening the neutrality principle could create a legal and policy basis for easing restrictions on Russia and the Russian Olympic Committee, which remains suspended following its recognition of Olympic councils in Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine. The IOC, however, has stated that no decision has yet been taken regarding Russia's status and that further consideration is required as to how the revised provisions will be implemented.

The developments follow the IOC's decision in May 2026 to lift all restrictions on Belarusian athletes, thereby permitting them to compete under their national flag and anthem and fuelling speculation that a similar approach may eventually be adopted in respect of Russia.

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