



2025:KER:72019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.NAGARESH

FRIDAY, THE 26TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2025 / 4TH ASWINA, 1947

WP(C) NO. 29970 OF 2025

PETITIONER:

DEION PAUL NAVEEN REPRESENTED BY HIS FATHER
AND NATURAL GUARDIAN NAVEEN PAUL
AGED 44 YEARS
S/O. K.L POULOSE RESIDING AT KANJOOKARAN HOUSE,
CHETTAPPALAM, THANNITHERU PADICHIRA,
WAYANAD, PIN - 673579

BY ADVS.
SRI.N.ANAND
SHRI.RAJESH O.N.
SHRI.AMEER SALIM
SHRI.ROY ANTONY

RESPONDENTS:

- 1 STATE OF KERALA
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION SECRETARIAT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM REPRESENTED BY ITS SECRETARY,
PIN - 695001
- 2 DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EDUCATION
DIRECTORATE OF GENERAL EDUCATION, HOUSING BOARD
BUILDING, SHANTHI NAGAR,
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695001
- 3 SCHOOL GAMES FEDERATION OF INDIA
CHAMBER NO. 704-705, AAKRITI TOWER 7TH FLOOR, 19B,
VIDHAN SABHA MARG, LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH
REPRESENTED BY ITS PRESIDENT, PIN - 226001



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W.P.(C) Nos.29970 & 32578 of 2025

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4 KERALA SPORTS COUNCIL
STATUE, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM KERALA
REPRESENTED BY ITS SECRETARY, PIN - 695001

5 THE KERALA STATE ARCHERY ASSOCIATION
CO BANK TOWERS, KALOOR, COCHIN
REPRESENTED BY ITS PRESIDENT, PIN - 682017

BY ADV
SMT. O.M. SHALINA, DSGI
SMT. LATHA ANAND
SRI. RAJEEV JYOTHISH GEORGE, GOVERNMENT PLEADER

THIS WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) HAVING COME UP FOR
ADMISSION ON 16.09.2025, ALONG WITH WP(C).32578/2025, THE
COURT ON 26.09.2025 DELIVERED THE FOLLOWING:



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W.P.(C) Nos.29970 & 32578 of 2025

: 3 :

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.NAGARESH

FRIDAY, THE 26TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2025 / 4TH ASWINA, 1947

WP(C) NO. 32578 OF 2025

PETITIONERS:

- 1 THRILOKNATH (MINOR)
 AGED 16 YEARS
 S/O MANOJ K DAS REPRESENTED BY HIS FATHER
 MANOJ K DAS AGED 46 YEARS, S/O VETTITHODI
 HOUSE, VADAVANNUR PALAKKAD, PIN - 678504

- 2 KASHINATH RENJITH
 AGED 14 YEARS
 S/O RENJITH VP S REPRESENTED BY HIS FATHER
 RENJITH VP PARAMESWARAN AGED 47 VADASSERY,
 CHETTUPUZHA PO. THRISSUR, PIN - 680012

- 3 YASHDEV A
 AGED 15 YEARS
 S/O ANOOP DEV V REPRESENTED BY HIS FATHER
 ANOOP DEV V AGED 43 S/O VASUDEVAN CHINNU
 MAVILKULABU KALAM VADAVANNUR PALAKKAD,
 PIN - 678504

- 4 FIDEL AMBATT
 AGED 14 YEARS
 S/O M ARUNKUMAR REPRESENTED BY HIS FATHER
 M ARUNKUMAR AGED 45 S/O PM MOHANKUMAR AKSHARAM
 KIZHAKKENCHERRY KALLEKKAD PALAKKAD,
 PIN - 678015

BY ADVS.
SHRI.T.K.SANDEEP
SMT.SWETHA R.



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RESPONDENTS:

- 1 STATE OF KERALA
 REPRESENTED BY SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL
 EDUCATION, SECRETARIAT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
 PIN - 695001

 - 2 THE DIRECTOR
 DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTIONS,
 JAGATHI, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695001

 - 3 KERALA STATE SPORTS COUNCIL
 REPRESENTED BY ITS SECRETARY, STATUE,
 THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695001

 - 4 SCHOOL GAMES FEDERATION OF INDIA,
 REPRESENTED BY ITS SECRETARY 18, PARK RD,
 RAJ BHAVAN COLONY, THE MALL AVENUE, LUCKNOW,
 UTTAR PRADESH, PIN - 226001
- BY ADV.
SMT. LATHA ANAND
SRI. RAJEEV JYOTHISH GEORGE, GOVERNMENT PLEADER

THIS WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) HAVING COME UP FOR
ADMISSION ON 16.09.2025, ALONG WITH WP(C).29970/2025, THE
COURT ON 26.09.2025 DELIVERED THE FOLLOWING:



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N. NAGARESH, J.

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W.P.(C) Nos.29970 and 32578 of 2025
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Dated this the 26th day of September, 2025

J U D G M E N T

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W.P.(C) No.29970/2025 has been filed by the petitioner seeking to direct the State of Kerala and the Director General of Education to create a separate category of Under-14 for the event of Archery under Ext.P8 Circular and use the same yardstick implemented by the School Games Federation of India in holding the event.

2. W.P.(C) No.32578/2025 is filed by four Secondary and Higher Secondary School students seeking to



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direct the Director of Public Instructions to conduct Roller Skating competition for Under-17 age group to enable the petitioners to participate in Under-17 category in District and State Level competition.

3. The petitioner in W.P.(C) No.29970/2025 states that the expertise, strength, skill and proficiency in sport of a 14 year old defers vastly from a 17 year old. Therefore, the School Games Federation of India holds separate archery events at the national level for Under-14 and Under-17 boys. However, the State authorities are treating both the Under-14 and Under-17 archery participants similarly and make them compete in a single event. This results in the Under-14 participants losing out to Under-17. Outstanding sportsmen Under-14 remain unnoticed and consequently, the gifted participants do not receive training and attention which is required.

4. At the age of 10 years, the petitioner participated in selection trial held by the Archery Academy,



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Pulppally, Wayanad under the Kerala Sports Council. The petitioner performed well in Under-14 category and he was admitted for training under “Khelo India Scheme” of the Central Government, which is intended to train sportsmen from young age to participate and win Olympic medals for the country.

5. The petitioner states that as part of training routine, he wakes up at 5 am and starts his day with 1½ hour practice at 6 am. The petitioner also practises for 2 hours in the evening from 4.30 pm to 6.30 pm. While studying in 7th Standard, the petitioner participated in the Southern Zone Archery Meet conducted by the CBSE at Pune, representing Kerala. The petitioner also participated in the Archery championship for Under-13 Boys held by the Kerala State Archery Association at State Level. Consequently, the petitioner represented the State at the National Level competition held by the Archery Association of India.



6. The grievance of the petitioner is that the State authorities neither follow or respect the difference between a 14 year old and 17 year old. The State authorities hold Archery events in the Under-17 and Under-19 categories alone. The 9 year old and 10 year old are forced to compete with far senior students. Though the petitioner submitted Ext.P7 request to the Government to carve out a separate Under-14 category for the Archery events, the Director General of Education is yet to take a decision. To the predicament of the petitioner, by Ext.P8 Circular dated 31.07.2025, the Director has confined the discipline of Archery to Under-17 and Under-19 categories alone, as Group I. The petitioner therefore seeks to declare that the non-constitution of Under-14 category for the event of Archery is arbitrary and violative of Article 14.

7. In W.P.(C) No.32578/2025, the petitioners raise a similar grievance with respect to the sport of Roller Skating, for which competition is held only for Under-19



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category and the children from age group 11 to 17 are forced to compete in Under-19 category with seniors. Once a child aged 11 years enrolls for Under-19 category in Roller Skating, he will be forced to compete in all the sports and games in Under-19 seniors category alone in both State Level and National Level. This will be at a time when children from other States get a level playing field to compete in their respective age category.

8. The Director General of Education resisted the writ petition filing a statement dated 09.09.2025. The Director General stated that the students under the age of 14 are not forced to compete in events designed for those Under 17. The Department of General Education has already finalised the schedule for 41 school sports and games competition, aligning with the National School Meet Schedule (tentative) issued by the School Games Federation of India.

9. If further category competitions are included, it will be impossible to complete the Sub District, Revenue



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District and State Level competitions on time. Inclusion of additional category requires additional venue, officials, equipments and financial requirements. The General Education Department only organises the competition included in the State School Sports Manual approved by the Government of Kerala. The School Sports Manual as it exists today does not include Archery Under-14 category competition. It is the discretionary power of the Government to create categories. The writ petitions are therefore liable to be dismissed.

10. I have heard the learned counsel for the petitioners, the learned Government Pleader representing the State of Kerala, the learned Deputy Solicitor General of India representing the School Games Federation of India and the learned Standing Counsel representing the Kerala Sports Council.

11. The grievance of the petitioners is relating to non-inclusion of Under-14 category for Archery events and



Under-17 category in Roller Skating in the Sub District, District and State Level competitions, held by the respondents. The petitioners state that the non-inclusion of younger categories results in young talented children competing with very senior sportsmen resulting in their losing chance to win medals at the tender age and consequently in their gradual elimination from the official competitions. There cannot be any dispute that the School Athletes Under-14, Under-17 and Under-19 belong to different classes altogether. The seniors have more practice and better physical endurance over the younger Athletes. The School Games Federation of India has therefore placed these categories in different groups for competing. Unfortunately, the State authorities are oblivious of the requirements and have ignored the sound principle followed by the School Games Federation of India.

12. A separate Under-14 category for Archery events and Under-17 category in Roller Skating events will



bring spotlight on the gifted ones who can be trained to win medals at Commonwealth and Asian Games and even in Olympics from the age of 14 itself. When the younger category students are grouped with seniors, the latter overshadow them. The State thus loses opportunity to identify talents at a younger age and train them to achieve medals at National and International level.

13. The Government of Kerala has framed Manual of Kerala State School Athletics and Games Meets. The Kerala School Games Association constituted has the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala as Chief Patron and the Director of Public Instructions as Ex-officio Chairman. The Manual provides that every School shall conduct School competitions within the School in Games and Athletics and that the School authorities may conduct competitions in as many number of games and as many number of events in Athletics and Aquatics included in Appendix No.1. The Manual also provides for inter-school competitions in Athletics



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among the LP and UP School within the Educational Sub District for the age group of 12 years. The winners of each event shall be sent to Sub District Athletics competition.

14. It is therefore evident that the Manual of Kerala State Schools Athletics and Games Meet envisages separate competition for LP and UP children. However, the Appendix to the Manual does not provide Under-14 category for Archery events and Under-17 category for Roller Skating events. It is to be kept in mind that Archery is an event where India get medals in the Commonwealth and Asian Games and even in Olympics. When the particular Athletic event has promising future in India, it is unfortunate that the Government of Kerala has ignored the importance of carving out Under-14 category for the event. Article 21A of the Constitution of India confers right to education and commands that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years. Right to play sports is an inseparable and intrinsic part of the fundamental right to



education.

15. The contention of the respondents is that inclusion of additional category of events requires additional venue, officials, equipment and financial requirements. The State also claims discretionary power in the matter of categorisation. It is indeed true that the authorities have a discretion in the matter. However, such discretion should be exercised judiciously and taking into consideration the larger national interest. In the facts and circumstances of the case, non-inclusion of Under-14 category for the Archery event and Under-17 category for Roller Skating at Sub District, District and State Level School events/competitions has to be treated as discriminatory offending Article 14 of the Constitution of India. The respondents are therefore compellable to include Under-14 category for Archery events and Under-17 category in Roller Skating events at the Sub District Level, District Level and State Level Athletics and Games Meets.



16. Directive principles of State Policy, in Article 39(f) of the Constitution mandates that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and moral and material abandonment. The Manual of Kerala State School Athletics and Games Meet forces the School children of the tender age of 9 and 10 years to compete with elders of 17 to 19 years of age, in the Archery events. It does not augur well for development of children in a healthy manner, which is a Constitutional directive. The State has a responsibility to ensure that physical activity is integrated into children's development for mental, social and physical well being. The State therefore has a duty to develop sports infrastructure to international standards and to ensure its availability in Schools.

17. The Government Pleader would urge that this Court under Article 226 of the Constitution of India and in



exercise of the writ jurisdiction cannot interfere with the provisions of the Manual of Kerala State Schools Athletics and Games Meet and give directions which are not in consonance with the Manual. As the Manual of Kerala State Schools Athletics and Games Meet is not of a statutory character, this Court can indeed give directions to the State to amend the Manual taking into consideration justice, equity and public interest.

18. However, it is to be noted that the Sub District Level and District Level events for the current year have proceeded ahead considerably and grounds and venues are already fixed. The School Sports and Games events are scheduled so as to align with the National School Meet held by the School Games Federation of India. Therefore, any interference in the Schools Athletics and Games Meets at this stage in the current year would disrupt the entire schedule causing loss to other student-participants of Kerala.



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In the facts and circumstances of the case, without interfering in the Schools Athletics and Games Meet of the current academic year, the writ petitions are disposed of directing respondents 1 and 2 to include Under-14 category for Archery events and Under-17 category for Roller Skating events in the Sub District, District and State Level competitions from the academic year 2026-2027 onwards.

Sd/-

N. NAGARESH, JUDGE

aks/25.09.2025



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APPENDIX OF WP(C) 29970/2025

PETITIONER'S EXHIBITS

Exhibit P1	A TRUE COPY OF THE ESTIMATE ISSUED BY M/S. GX ARCHERY
Exhibit P2	A TRUE COPY OF THE PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATE DATED 18.11.2024 ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
Exhibit P3	A TRUE COPY OF THE UNDATED CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE WAYANADU DISTRICT ARCHERY ASSOCIATION TO PETITIONER
Exhibit P4	A TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE DATED 29.11.2024 ISSUED BY THE KERALA STATE ARCHERY ASSOCIATION
Exhibit P5	A TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE DATED 11.08.2025, ATTESTING PETITIONER'S PARTICIPATION AT THE NATIONAL U-13 ARCHERY CHAMPIONSHIP ISSUED BY THE KERALA STATE ARCHERY ASSOCIATION
Exhibit P6	A TRUE COPY OF THE RELEVANT PAGE OF THE CALENDAR ISSUED BY RESPONDENT NO.3 SCHOOL GAMES FEDERATION OF INDIA FOR 2025-26
Exhibit P7	A TRUE COPY OF THE REQUEST SUBMITTED BY THE PETITIONER BEFORE THE PETITIONER BEFORE THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
Exhibit P8	A TRUE COPY OF THE CIRCULAR DATED 31.07.2025 ISSUED BY RESPONDENT NO. 2 IN NO. DGE/14751/2025-SPORTS2
Exhibit P9	A TRUE COPY OF THE CIRCULAR DATED 03.09.2025 ISSUED BY RESPONDENT NO.2 IN NO. DGE/14751/2025-SPORTS 2
Exhibit P10	A TRUE COPY OF THE UNDATED NOTIFICATION ISSUED BY RESPONDENT NO.1



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APPENDIX OF WP(C) 32578/2025

PETITIONER'S EXHIBITS

Exhibit P1	TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ISSUED BY ROLLER SKATING FEDERATION OF INDIA TO THE 1ST PETITIONER DATED NIL
Exhibit P2	TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ISSUED BY ROLLER SKATING FEDERATION OF INDIA TO THE 1ST PETITIONER
Exhibit P3	TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ISSUED BY ROLLER SKATING FEDERATION OF INDIA TO THE 2ND PETITIONER
Exhibit P4	TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ISSUED BY ROLLER SKATING FEDERATION OF INDIA TO THE 2ND PETITIONER
Exhibit P5	TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ISSUED BY ROLLER SKATING FEDERATION OF INDIA TO THE 3RD PETITIONER
Exhibit P6	TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ISSUED BY ROLLER SKATING FEDERATION OF INDIA TO THE 3RD PETITIONER DATED NIL
Exhibit P7	TRUE COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ISSUED BY PALAKKAD DISTRICT ROLLER SKATING ASSOCIATION TO THE 4TH PETITIONER DATED NIL
Exhibit p8	TRUE COPY OF THE JUDGMENT DATED 20/09/2023 IN WP(C) IN 30304/ 2023 BY THIS HON'BLE COURT
Exhibit p9	TRUE COPY OF THE CIRCULAR DATED 31.07.2025 ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT OF KERALA,