



2025:DHC:10148



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* IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

% *Judgment pronounced on: 18.11.2025*+ **W.P.(C) 7029/2025 & CM APPL. 31725/2025**

TAEKWONDO FEDERATION OF INDIA Petitioner
Through: Mr. Rahul Mehra (Sr. Advocate)
along with Mr. Saurabh Jain,
Mr. Chaitanya Gosain, Mr. Prayag
Jain, Mr. Shahid Ali, Mr. Mohd.
Salman and Mr. Sameer Tayyeb,
Advocates.

versus

UNION OF INDIA AND ORS. Respondents
Through: Mr. Udit Dedhiya (SPC) along with
Mr. Apurva Sachdev, Ms. Vidhi (GP)
and Mr. Preyansh Gupta, Advocates
for UOI.
Mr. Vikash Singh and Mr. Ujjwal
Chaudhary, Advocates for R-2/IOA.
Mr. Darpan Wadhwa (Sr. Advocate)
along with Mr. Sanjeev Mahajan,
Mr. Parth Goswami, Mr. R.A. Iyer,
Mr. Ayush Yadav, Advocates for R-3.

CORAM:**HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SACHIN DATTA****JUDGMENT**

1. The present petition has been filed by the petitioner [Taekwondo Federation of India (TFI)] assailing a communication / letter dated 08.05.2025, issued by the respondent no.1/Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), Union of India, whereby, India Taekwondo/respondent no.3 has been granted recognition as the National Sports Federation (NSF) for the sport of Taekwondo in India. The said letter reads as under:



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“Subject: Recognition of India Taekwondo as the National Sports Federation (NSF) for promotion and development of sport of Taekwondo in the country - reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to India Taekwondo's letters dated 23.11.2024 and 22.04.2025 requesting for Government recognition, and to say that the request has been considered in this Ministry taking into account the letter dated 09.04.2025 from World Taekwondo and letter dated 23.01.2025 from Asian Taekwondo Union, provided by the India Taekwondo, which confirm affiliation of India Taekwondo with these respective international and continental governing bodies for Taekwondo.

Considering the factors in totality including the affiliation of India Taekwondo with World Taekwondo and Asian Taekwondo Union, as also to ensure participation of Indian taekwondo players in international events, including the forthcoming Asian Games 2026, it has been decided to grant recognition to India Taekwondo as a National Sports Federation (NSF) for the sport of 'Taekwondo', with immediate effect till conclusion of Asian Games, 2026 and Para Asian Games, 2026.

2. This recognition to India Taekwondo means granting a major role to the India Taekwondo for promotion and development of the Taekwondo sport in India.

3. The recognition of Government is subject to continued observance of the following terms and conditions as prescribed in the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011 in a time-bound manner:-

a) The Office bearers of the federation shall invariably be appointed by election as per the Model Election Guidelines issued by the Ministry. The various instructions issued by the Ministry, from time to time, including the age and tenure criteria, for holding offices of the federation shall be scrupulously followed.

b) The Federation shall give at least two months' advance notice to the Government for any change in its Constitution. The copy of the proposed changes should invariably be sent along with the notice.

c) The Federation must maintain its accounts as per the Mercantile System of accounting. The accounting year should be from 1st April to 31 st March. The books of accounts shall always be open to inspection by authorized representatives of the Government.

d) The accounts of the Federation must be audited by a practicing Chartered Accountant. Audited Statement of account should be sent to the



Union Government within six months from the date of expiry of the accounting year.

e) The Federation must scrupulously abide by the guidelines of the Government issued from time to time, for the conduct of National Championships, drawing of advance calendar for holding National Championships, players' grievance system in the management of the Federation, etc.

f) The Federation shall have corresponding State/UT bodies affiliated to it in all the State/UTs in conformity with the provisions of the Sports Code.

g) The Federation should also abide by the directions of the Government issued, if any, in the interest of promotion of Taekwondo sports among its players or public in general.

h) The recognition can be reviewed by the Government in case Memorandum of Association (MOA) of the Federation or its practices come into conflict with the Government guidelines issued from time to time.

i) The Ministry's guidelines for selection procedure shall be followed by India Taekwondo. The tournaments shall be held for Men & Women at all levels in National, State, District level for Senior, Junior and Sub-Junior categories.

j) The Federation shall scrupulously follow the Ministry's guidelines on RTI applicability and suo-moto disclosure of information on its website and appointment of Public Information Officer and Appellate Authority.

k) The Federation shall ensure strict compliance of the Government guidelines relating to age fraud, prevention of sexual harassment of women in sports, formation of Internal Complaint Committee in accordance with the provisions of the POSH Act, 2013, Anti-doping, issuance of identity cards to sportspersons etc.

l) India Taekwondo shall approach the India Olympic Association (IOA) to get its affiliation.

4. The recognition may be withdrawn if:

a) any of the terms and conditions of the recognition are violated;

b) its own Constitution is violated;

c) directions issued by the Union Government are not complied with as required;



d) in the opinion of the Union Government, the Federation is not functioning properly,

e) the recognition has been obtained by submitting false information or by mis-representation of facts;

f) the concerned international Federation cancels affiliation or derecognizes or disaffiliates the Federation.

This issues with the approval of competent authority.”

2. The petitioner in the present petition is aggrieved by the aforesaid impugned communication/letter issued by the respondent no.1 inasmuch as the same seeks to confer the status of a NSF upon the respondent no.3/India Taekwondo, despite the petitioner already being a recognized NSF for the concerned sport. It is submitted that such recognition was conferred upon the petitioner by the respondent no.1/MYAS, Union of India *vide* a letter dated 17.03.2023. It is further the case of the petitioner that the impugned communication came to be issued by the respondent no.1 without being preceded by either an order of suspension or withdrawal of recognition of the petitioner as an NSF and/or a show cause notice seeking to put the petitioner to notice as to any circumstance which may warrant suspension or withdrawal of recognition.

3. The background of the matter is that owing to factional disputes within the petitioner federation (TFI), several petitions including W.P.(C) 10938/2017 titled as **“Taekwondo Federation of India v. Indian Olympic Association and Ors.”** and W.P.(C) 11674/2019 titled as **“Anish Das Talukdar (Minor) Through Ms. Sasmita Das Talukar (Legal Gardinan and Mother) and Anr. v. Union of India and Others”** came to be filed before this Court seeking direction/s for fresh elections of the petitioner



federation and safeguarding the interest of players of Taekwondo in India.

4. During the pendency of the aforementioned dispute/s, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA)/ respondent no.2 vide a communication/ letter dated 12.07.2019 constituted an *ad-hoc* Body for administration of sport of Taekwondo in India. The said communication reads as under: -

**“FORMATION OF AD-HOC COMMITTEE FOR
TAEKWONDO FEDERATION OF INDIA**

Dear Sirs,

The Taekwondo Federation of India is an affiliated member unit of Indian Olympic Association, so they are bound to abide the Rules and Regulations of the Indian Olympic Association to continue its membership.

The matter of Taekwondo Federation of India was discussed in the Annual General Meeting held on 22.12.2018. The General Assembly has unanimously approved that

"Register a new society for the governance of Taekwondo in India, which shall replace as new affiliated National Sports Federation of IOA for Taekwondo till such time the new Society is registered, five member Ad-Hoc body be formed in which one member will be from the International body to Taekwondo".

In view of the decision of the General Assembly of the Indian Olympic Association, an Ad-hoc committee is formed with the following members:-

- 1) Mr Namdev Shirgaonkar - **Chairman***
- 2) Mr S.M. Bali - **Member***
- 3) Ms Sunaina Kumari - **Member***
- 4) Mr Digvijay Singh - **Member***
- 5) Nominee of International Taekwondo Federation - **Member***

*The Ad-Hoc Committee has to work as per decision of the IOA General Assembly and to complete all procedures **within six months**. Electoral College for conducting the election should be prepared in consultation with the concerned State Olympic Associations under information of*



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IOA.”

5. It is averred in the present petition that instead of adhering with the aforesaid mandate and scope, the aforementioned *ad-hoc* body without any prior approval or recognition from the respondent no.1, unilaterally constituted itself as India Taekwondo/ respondent no.3. Thereafter, by falsely projecting itself as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India, it sought affiliation from International Federation i.e., World Taekwondo.

6. The concerned International Federation viz. World Taekwondo (allegedly on the basis of the aforementioned misrepresentation) issued a communication dated 04.12.2019 purporting to recognise India Taekwondo/respondent no.3 as the sole national governing body for the sport of Taekwondo in India, and withdrew the recognition accorded to the petitioner (TFI). The said communication dated 04.12.2019 issued by World Taekwondo reads as under:-

“Ref: 2019/019

Date: 4 December 2019

To: Taekwondo Federation of India

Attn.: Mr. D.N. Pangotra, President

Sent by e-mail: secretarytaekwondoIndia@gmail.com,
President.tfi@gmail.com

Subject: *withdrawal of recognition - TFI as the national governing body of Taekwondo*

Dear Mr. Pangotra,

World Taekwondo (hereinafter: WT) has been monitoring the situation in India for the past months. Due to good governance issues and multiple complaints, your federation was preliminary suspended as member of WT on 10 July 2019. Your federation has insufficiently shown to remedy the cause of the preliminary suspension. As a consequence, WT and the India Olympic Association have been working closely together to find a solution in the best interests of the athletes. Considering all circumstances and recent positive developments and under the authority



vested in Article 9.2 of the WT Statutes, our President decided to recognize "**India Taekwondo**" as the sole national governing body of Taekwondo in India and consequently withdraw the WT recognition of your federation with immediate effect. Use of WT names or logos are strictly prohibited from this date. This decision of revocation is scheduled to be ratified by the WT Council on 5 December 2019 at its meeting as stipulated in Article 14.4 of our Statutes.

Sincerely yours,
Sd/-
Hoss Rafaty
Secretary-General”

7. It also transpires that a communication came to be addressed by the respondent no.2/IOA expressing reservations at the manner in which the respondent no.3/India Taekwondo was set up by the person/s who were part of the *ad-hoc* Committee constituted by the IOA. In this regard, on 14.11.2025, during the course of proceedings, a copy of an order dated 08.02.2022 passed by the Ethics Commission of IOA/respondent no.2 has also been handed over by the learned senior counsel for the petitioner. The findings rendered by the Ethics Commission of IOA in the said order dated 08.02.2022 reads as under:-

“41. Findings and report of the Commission:

After hearing the Complainant, the members of the Commission are of a view that Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar is in clear violation of the Ethics Rules of the IOA particularly Conflict of Interest.

The Commission notes that The Ad-Hoc Committee of Taekwondo was constituted by the IOA in consultation with the World Taekwondo which was approved in the AGM of the IOA held on 22.12.2019. The IOA through its President vide letter dated 15.7.2019 had formed the Ad-Hoc Committee for Taekwondo making you the chairman with a very specific mandate i.e. to form the new society for Taekwondo and prepare the electoral college in consultation with the concerned State Olympic Associations under information to IOA.

Relevant page of the Letter to the AD Hoc Committee Taekwondo by IOA



"Register a new society for the governance of Taekwondo in India, which shall replace as new affiliated National Sports Federation of IOA for Taekwondo till such time the new Society is registered, five member Ad-Hoc body be formed in which one member will be from the International body of Taekwondo".

In view of the decision of the General Assembly of the Indian Olympic Association, an Ad-hoc committee is formed with the following members:-

- 1) Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar- Chairman*
- 2) Mr. S.M. Bali- Member*
- 3) Mr. Digvijay Singh - Member*
- 4) Nominee of World Taekwondo - Member*

The Ad-Hoc Committee has to work as per decision of the IOA General Assembly and advised to complete all procedures within six months. Electoral College for conducting the election should be prepared in consultation with the concerned State Olympic Associations under information to IOA.

*Warm Regards,
Sd/-*

Dr. Narinder Dhruv Batra

42. The above mandate is very clear that the new members of India Taekwondo are only to be made from the existing State units of Taekwondo from the State Olympic Association. This was a concern as it is apprehended that those who form the ad hoc committee, try to takeover the NSF by making new members. This issue was again discussed in the IOA AGM on 30.12.2019.

43. Relevant paragraphs are mentioned below:

Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar said this is internal matter of that organization, he informed there is another letter which he feels Mr. Hemant has not gone through whereby WT Asia has disaffiliated Taekwondo Federation of India. Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar further said they have already modified their EC meeting of 6 December, 2019. Dr. Bhanot said he does not see any complication in this, we need to approve INDIA TAEKWONDI as we have approved Ski and Snowboard India with full membership, in May 2020 after completing all the formalities we can approve them. Mr. Sudhanshu Mittal said what Dr. Bhanot has said that is very important since this is interim period we should be very careful those who formulate and did the frame work does not become



themselves the office bearers. President, IOA said people those formed society will move out once a permanent set up is formed he gave his example when society for Hockey was formed as he was from Hockey so he remained and those from other sports moved out. President, IOA mentioned people from State units and only those from taekwondo will ultimately get in. Mr. Sudhanshu Mittal said if they are given Associate membership then there is no problem. President, IOA said Taekwondo is given membership of JOA in Associate category and if they get recognition in May 2020, they will automatically become permanent member of JOA, President, JOA informed Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar that they have to get all clearances from World Taekwondo till 30th June, 2020. Approval should be subject to fulfilling all conditions.

44. In the above context, no new members can be made by India Taekwondo in any state and the only members that IT can affiliate are the existing ones who have the membership of SOA as on 30.12.2019.

45. The Complainant being an existing an ongoing member of the SOA in Telangana, there was no business of Mr. Namdev to go and change the state sports association of Taekwondo in Telangana.

46. The Commission of the view that this is of course done for the purpose of manipulating the elections of Olympic Association of Telangana.

47. In the above backdrop and the history as shown to us by the Complainant, the Commission is the view that Mr. Namdev is guilty and violated the Ethics Rules of the IOA and the following sanctions be recommended to the IOA General Assembly to be put on the Respondent Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar in the next AGM/SGM of the IOA:

1. Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar be suspended from all sporting activities related to the India Taekwondo.
2. Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar be removed from all positions/nominations given to him by the IOA related to taekwondo.
3. Mr. Namdev Shirgaonkar be removed from all India Taekwondo Activities whether as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee or in any other capacity subsequent to his appointment as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee.

It is pertinent to mention that the IOA Executive Council's term has come to an end on 14.12.2021 and fresh elections for the Executive Council of the IOA are due. For the purpose of good governance, the



recommendations for sanctions are being sent to the General Assembly of the IOA.”

8. Subsequently, *vide* an order dated 15.02.2022 passed by this Court in W.P.(C) 11674/2019 it was also recorded that the aforesaid entity i.e., India Taekwondo (respondent no.3 herein) was not recognized as an NSF. Further, *vide* an order dated 28.04.2022 in the aforementioned petition, this Court *inter-alia* issued appropriate directions for conduct of elections of the petitioner and directed the respondent no.1/MYAS, Union of India to take expeditious steps to recognize a suitable federation as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India. The said order dated 28.04.2022 reads as under:-

“1. The present petition has been preferred by two players in the sport of Taekwondo, seeking a direction to the respondent no.1/ Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and to the respondent no.2/ Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to conduct elections for the Executive Committee of the Taekwondo Federation of India as per the electoral college prepared by the Hon’ble Mr. Justice R.S.Sodhi (Retd.) on 04.05.2016, in compliance of this Court’s order dated 13.03.2016 passed in W.P.(C) 2753/2016.

2. The record shows that during the pendency of the present petition various interim orders have been passed from time to time and the memo of parties has been amended on account of some additional parties being added as respondents.

3. Today, after arguing the matter at some length, learned counsel for all the parties, except learned counsel representing respondent no.6/India Taekwondo, are at unison that the petition be disposed of by directing fresh elections of the Taekwondo Federation of India to be expeditiously conducted under the supervision of a Court Commissioner-cum-Returning Officer appointed by this Court, on the basis of the electoral college prepared by Justice R.S.Sodhi (Retd.), as amended at the time of the last election held pursuant to the notification dated 01.06.2016. Insofar as the respondent no.6 is concerned, Mr.Baruah appearing on behalf of the said respondent submits that since Taekwondo India has no connection with the Taekwondo Federation of India, he has no role to play in the elections of the said federation and therefore cannot oppose the said prayer made by the parties.



4. What emerges from the record is that on account of there being no National Sports Federation (NSF) for the sport of Taekwondo, it is the respondent no.6/Taekwondo India, an unregistered body which claims to be recognized by the World Taekwondo which has been mainly selecting players for the different international events in the sport of Taekwondo.

Though the petitioner claims that the respondent no.6 is wrongly trying to select players for the international team, the said assertion is denied by the respondent no.6. The IOA also alleges that it is receiving no cooperation from the respondent no.6, even this averment is vehemently denied by respondent no.6. In light of these allegations and counter allegations, it is evident that the sport of Taekwondo in the country is suffering and the genuine Taekwondo players are not getting the opportunity to represent the country. It would, therefore, be in the interest of the sport to direct holding of fresh elections to the executive committee of the Taekwondo Federation of India so as to enable the Union of India to take expeditious steps for recognizing a suitable federation as the National Sports Federation for the sport of Taekwondo.

5. The writ petition therefore deserves to be allowed by appointing a Court Commissioner-cum-Returning Officer for the purpose of conducting elections for the executive committee of the Taekwondo Federation of India. With the consent of the parties, the writ petition alongwith all pending applications is accordingly allowed by issuing the following directions:

i. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sistani, a retired judge of this Court is appointed as the Court Commissioner-cum-Returning Officer for holding the elections to the executive committee of the Taekwondo Federation of India.

ii. The elections will be held preferably within a period of two months from today. It will be open for the learned Court Commissioner to appoint officials of the respondent nos.1, 2 or 4, as observers to oversee the elections if deemed necessary.

iii. The learned Court Commissioner-cum-Returning Officer will for the present be paid a sum of Rs.5 lakh as honorarium besides secretarial expenses. Keeping in view the fact that as on date, there is no recognized National Sports Federation for the sport of Taekwondo which is receiving any grant from the respondent no.1, it is directed that this amount will be borne equally by the IOA and the respondent no.1. However, in case the task being entrusted to the learned Court Commissioner is not completed within a period of two months, it will be open for the parties to move an application to seek enhancement of the



honorarium.

iv. *The learned Court Commissioner will proceed on the basis of the Electoral College prepared by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice R.S.Sodhi (Retd.) on 04.05.2016, alongwith the amendments made in the Electoral College during the elections held in June, 2016 under the supervision of Hon'ble mr. Justice M.L. Mehta.*

v. *It will, however, be open for the learned Court Commissioner cum-Returning Officer to further amend the Electoral College upon an application by any party, including a person who is not before this Court. The decision of the learned Court Commissioner on this aspect will be treated as final.*

6. *Before I conclude, in order to safeguard the interests of the players, it would be necessary to pass orders to ensure selection of the Indian team/players to represent the country in international Taekwondo events till such time, when a duly elected federation is appointed as the National Sports Federation by the respondent no.1. It is the common case of the parties that vide its communication dated 11.09.2015, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs had directed the Sports Authority of India (SAI) to carry out the selections of the Taekwondo team to represent the country which directions have been reiterated as recently as on 05.04.2022 and 20.04.2022 . Keeping in view the fact that the respondent no.4/SAI appears to have not taken its responsibility seriously in the recent past, it would be in the interest of justice to direct the respondent no. 4 to make timely selection of players for representing the country in international events of Taekwondo for representing the country by consulting one of the following three renowned players of taekwondo, whose names have been unanimously suggested by the parties:-*

a) Mr.Rakesh Singh

b) Mr.Sandeep Kundu

c) Ms.Seema Deswal

7. *Once the elections of the Taekwondo Federation of India are held in accordance with this order, it is expected that the respondent no.1 will take expeditious steps to recognise a suitable federation as the National Sports Federation for the sport of Taekwondo.*

8. *It is expected that the World Taekwondo, while inviting Indian Players/Teams for international events, will also take into account the directions issued in this order."*



9. In compliance of the aforementioned order dated 28.04.2022, elections to elect the Executive Body (2022-2026) of the petitioner/TFI was conducted and results were declared on 14.11.2022. Consequently, a letter dated 17.03.2023 came to be issued by the respondent no.1, recognising the petitioner as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India. The said letter reads as under:

“Subject: Recognition of Taekwondo Federation of India for the sport of Taekwondo as National Sports Federation.reg.

Sir,

I am directed to say that the Taekwondo Federation of India was granted recognition by this Ministry as a National Sports Federation for the promotion and regulation of Taekwondo sports in the country. The annual recognition of the Taekwondo Federation of India (TFI) was not renewed after the year 2014 due to compliance /management issues with the Federation.

2. Hon'ble Delhi High Court vide its order dated 28.04.2022 in W.P:(C) 11674/2019, while taking note that Taekwondo India is an unregistered body; and that sport of Taekwondo in the country is suffering, and the genuine Taekwondo players are not getting the opportunity to represent the country, in the interest of the sport, passed directions for holding of fresh elections to the Executive Committee of the Taekwondo Federation of India so as to enable the Union of India to take expeditious steps for recognizing a suitable federation as the National Sports Federation for the sport of Taekwondo. Hon'ble Delhi Court appointed Retd. Hon'ble Mr Justice G. S. Sistani as Court Commissioner-cum-Returning Officer for holding the elections to the Executive Committee of the Taekwondo Federation of India.

3. The elections as per the above said Court Order have been held under the supervision of Retd. Justice G.S, Sistani, and the result of the above said election has been examined in light of the Sports Code provisions and it has been decided to accept the election of taekwondo Federation of India held on 14.11.2022 and following Office Bearers have been taken on records of the Ministry for the period 2022-2026:

S.No.	Post	Name
1.	President	Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh
2.	Secretary General	Shri. R. D. Mangueshkar
3.	Treasurer	Shri. Jasbir



4. Further, in view of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court's order dated 28.04.2022 in W.P.(C) No. 11674 of 2019, consequent upon acceptance of election of Taekwondo Federation of India, it has been decided to recognize Taekwondo Federation of India, represented by the above-said elected Office Bearers in the election conducted by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court appointed Court Commissioner-cum-Returning Officer, as National Sports Federation (NSF) for promotion and development of sport of Taekwondo in the country with immediate effect.

5. This recognition to Taekwondo Federation of India is with the condition that it shall comply with the provisions of National Sports Development Code of India; 2011 and other relevant guidelines issued by the Ministry from time to time; A copy of the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011, currently in force is available on the website of this Ministry i.e. <https://yas.nic.in/sports/national-sports-development:code-india-2011>.

6. Further, as Taekwondo is an Olympic Sports, Taekwondo Federation of India is hereby directed to get the affiliation of Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and approach the World Taekwondo (International Federation governing sport of Taekwondo) for getting its affiliation/recognition so that Indian athletes are not deprived off the opportunity to represent country in the international events.

This issue with the approval of competent authority.”

10. Pursuant thereto, the petitioner is stated to have corresponded extensively with the International Federation i.e., World Taekwondo seeking the latter's consideration to grant the petitioner status of Member National Association for the sport of Taekwondo in India. However, the same did not meet with a favourable response.

11. It is also brought out that in W.P.(C) 17973/2024 this Court vide order dated 24.12.2024 noted that the petitioner herein (TFI) enjoys the status of NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India. The relevant observations in the



said order reads as under:

“12. The Court has considered the aforementioned contentions. The immediate concern expressed by Mr. Mehra is the selection for the Game of Taekwondo in the upcoming 38th National Games for which the entries have to be sent by 3rd January, 2025. Considering the National Sports Code, 2011, the relevant guidelines issued in this regard and the fact that the Petitioner’s status as NSF has been recognised by the Government of India, the Court finds merit in the contentions urged by Mr. Mehra. The IOA’s course of action might have been appropriate if the Petitioner’s recognition as an NSF had been revoked. However, in the absence of such revocation, and with the Petitioner still being a recognized NSF, the Court finds merit in the Petitioner’s request for the consideration of the names they have selected for the upcoming games.”

12. Again, in W.P(C) 17973/2024 vide order dated 13.01.2025, it was recorded as under:

“17. Since, the learned counsel for UOI has submitted in these proceedings that TFI has been recognized as the National Sports Federation (NSF) for the sport of Taekwondo and yet not been de-recognised (although the recognition is stated to be under review), it would be apposite that the fresh open selection trials are conducted under the aegis of the TFI. However, a representative of IOA and/or GTCC shall be entitled to remain present and oversee the conduct of the trials.”

13. In the above background, it is stated that the petitioner filed the present petition being aggrieved by the fact that despite the existing recognition of the petitioner as the NSF by the MYAS, Union of India/ respondent no.1 and this Court having taken note of the same in the aforesaid orders dated 24.12.2024 and 13.01.2025 in W.P(C) 17973/2024, the impugned order came to be passed on 08.05.2025, recognising the respondent no.3 (India Taekwondo) as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo.

SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER

14. Mr. Rahul Mehra, learned senior counsel for the applicant/petitioner



has emphasized that the petitioner has been the recognized NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India since the order dated 17.03.2023 (Annexure P-10) came to be issued by the MYAS, Union of India/respondent no.1. It is also submitted that there can only be one recognized NSF for any sport in terms of the provisions of the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011 (hereinafter referred as “*the Sports Code*”).

15. It is further submitted that the Sports Code contemplates a specific procedure for suspension or withdrawal of recognition of an NSF, which has not been followed in the present case. It is contended that no show cause notice has ever been issued by the MYAS, Union of India seeking to withdraw the recognition of the petitioner. It is also contended that in such circumstances, the impugned order is in the teeth of the provisions of the Sports Code and has the effect of disrupting the administration of the sport of Taekwondo in India.

16. It is also submitted that the impugned order has been issued without taking into account the antecedents of the respondent no.3 and the fact that the very constitution of the respondent no.3 is tainted on account of serious conflict of interest. It is stated that the respondent no.3 was set up by some member/s of the *ad-hoc* Committee (constituted by the IOA/respondent no.2 on 12.07.2019, to administer the sport of Taekwondo in India) who used/abused their position not only by setting up the parallel body (the respondent no.3) but also by exerting influence on the International Body for according recognition to respondent no.3.

17. It is submitted that in any event, the petitioner has enjoyed the stature as a NSF for a long period and the same cannot be discontinued on the directive of the International Body or by way of an arbitrary executive order



issued by the respondent no.1, without following the principles of natural justice.

SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS

18. Mr. Sanjeev Mahajan, learned counsel for the respondent no.3 has strenuously controverted the submissions advanced by the learned senior counsel on behalf of the petitioner.

19. It is submitted that serious factional conflicts within the petitioner federation are evident from the order dated 31.01.2025 passed by the Allahabad High Court in Writ C. No.864 of 2025. It is further submitted that in view of the faction riddled status of the petitioner, there is a genuine concern as to the validity of the authorization on the basis of which the present petition has been instituted. Reliance has also been placed on the Writ Petition(s) (Civil) No(s).234/2025 filed before the Supreme Court of India purportedly on behalf of the petitioner, to again emphasize the point that multiple person/s claim to represent the TFI.

20. It has been emphasized that the petitioner was validly suspended and then disaffiliated by the World Taekwondo. It is emphasized that the situation which led to such suspension and disaffiliation continues to subsist and as such, the petitioner has lost the right to represent itself as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India. It is further emphasized that the petitioner has not only been disaffiliated by the World Taekwondo but has also been de-recognized by the IOA/respondent no.2.

21. It is strongly contended that under the Sports Code, there is a system of annual recognition which is automatically renewed subject to furnishing of requisite documents by the concerned NSF every year. It is submitted that



in terms of the relevant circulars, which form part of Annexure XV to the Sports Code, an NSF is required to give details of accreditation by the Asian and International Federations along with documentary evidence.

22. It is further submitted that the annual recognition of TFI was not extended for the year 2024 due to non-submission of the necessary documents. Hence, TFI lost its recognition in the year 2024 itself.

23. Further, it is submitted that two letters / show cause notices dated 05.08.2024 and 22.10.2024 were issued by the Department of Sports, MYAS, Union of India to TFI (the petitioner) to provide the document/s showing affiliation with or by the International Federation. However, the petitioner failed to provide the same. In the circumstances, there was valid justification for discontinuing the recognition of the petitioner.

24. It is also submitted that no show cause notice was required to be given for the aforesaid purpose inasmuch as in the present case, the recognition of the petitioner was not renewed and therefore the same cannot be equated with withdrawal or suspension of recognition in terms of Annexure III of the Sports Code.

25. The submissions by Mr. Udit Dedhiya, learned counsel for the Union of India are identical to those canvassed by the learned counsel for the respondent no.3. He further emphasizes that the grant of recognition or withdrawal or suspension of recognition of an NSF falls within the ambit of the executive powers of the Union of India.

26. It is also submitted that the petitioner's recognition as an NSF for the sport of Taekwondo was conditional upon the petitioner obtaining affiliation / recognition from the International Federation, which it failed to do. It is submitted that ample opportunity was given to the petitioner for the said



purpose, however, to no avail.

27. It is submitted that World Taekwondo is the concerned International Federation governing the sport of Taekwondo internationally and only the events held under its aegis are considered as official international events. It is further submitted that since the respondent no.3 got affiliation from the World Taekwondo and from the concerned Asian Federation, it was deemed appropriate to accord recognition to the respondent no.3. It is further submitted that the same has been done in the interest of the sport of Taekwondo and to ensure that the sportspersons from India are not precluded from participating in International Events.

REASONING AND CONCLUSION

28. I have considered the rival contentions of the respective counsel for the parties.

29. At the outset, this Court expresses its anguish at the fact that for an inordinately long period, the sport of Taekwondo has remained in a state of turmoil in India. The factual conspectus as placed before this Court reveals that as far back as on 12.07.2019, the respondent no.2/IOA was constrained to appoint an *ad-hoc* Committee to govern the sport of Taekwondo in India. However, the chequered sequence of events that took place thereafter (as noted hereinabove), did not serve to ameliorate the situation.

30. Importantly, it is noticed that this Court in W.P.(C) 11674/2019 *vide* orders dated 15.02.2022 and 28.04.2022, took note of the fact that the respondent no.3 had not been recognised as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo (even though the petitioner had been purported to be suspended from the World Federation as far back as in 2019). Further, the



aforementioned order dated 28.04.2022, which *inter-alia* gave directions for conducting elections to elect the Executive Body (2022-2026) of the petitioner Federation, also expressly clarified as under:-

“7. Once the elections of the Taekwondo Federation of India are held in accordance with this order, it is expected that the respondent no.1 will take expeditious steps to recognise a suitable federation as the National Sports Federation for the sport of Taekwondo.”

31. Once the elections were concluded, the MYAS, Union of India took a conscious call to issue a communication / letter dated 17.03.2023 expressly (i) approving the elections that were held to elect the Executive Body of the petitioner [in terms of the aforesaid order dated 28.04.2022 passed in W.P.(C) 11674/2019] (ii) grant recognition to the petitioner as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India. The relevant portion of the communication dated 17.03.2023 is again reproduced as under:

“4. Further, in view of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court's order dated 28.04.2022 in W.P.(C) No. 11674 of 2019, consequent upon acceptance of election of Taekwondo Federation of India, it has been decided to recognize Taekwondo Federation of India, represented by the above-said elected Office Bearers in the election conducted by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court appointed Court Commissioner-cum-Returning Officer, as National Sports Federation (NSF) for promotion and development of sport of Taekwondo in the country with immediate effect.

5. This recognition to Taekwondo Federation of India is with the condition that it shall comply with the provisions of National Sports Development Code of India; 2011 and other relevant guidelines issued by the Ministry from time to time; A copy of the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011, currently in force is available on the website of this Ministry i.e. <https://yas.nic.in/sports/national-sports-development:code-india-2011>.

6. Further, as Taekwondo is an Olympic Sports, Taekwondo Federation of India is hereby directed to get the affiliation of Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and approach the World Taekwondo



(International Federation governing sport of Taekwondo) for getting its affiliation/recognition so that Indian athletes are not deprived off the opportunity to represent country in the international events.”

32. Although it has been sought to be contended that the petitioner’s recognition as NSF was not renewed in the year 2024, however, the said contention of the respondent/s is neither borne out from the records as placed before this Court, nor from the provisions / requirements of the Sports Code.

33. The said contention of the respondent/s is also belied from the observations made by this Court while passing an order dated 24.12.2024 in W.P.(C) 17973/2024. Notably, the said order even after expressly recording the contention of the India Taekwondo (the respondent no.3 herein) that the TFI (petitioner herein) stood de-recognized by the IOA/respondent no.2 and did not enjoy affiliation with the International Federation, specifically records that the petitioner’s status as NSF has been “recognized by the Government of India”. Consequently, certain interim directions were issued in favour of the petitioner. The relevant observations of the Court in the said order dated 24.12.2024 are as under:

“12. The Court has considered the aforementioned contentions. The immediate concern expressed by Mr. Mehra is the selection for the Game of Taekwondo in the upcoming 38th National Games for which the entries have to be sent by 3rd January, 2025. Considering the National Sports Code, 2011, the relevant guidelines issued in this regard and the fact that the Petitioner’s status as NSF has been recognised by the Government of India, the Court finds merit in the contentions urged by Mr. Mehra. The IOA’s course of action might have been appropriate if the Petitioner’s recognition as an NSF had been revoked. However, in the absence of such revocation, and with the Petitioner still being a recognized NSF, the Court finds merit in the Petitioner’s request for the consideration of the names they have selected for the upcoming games.”



34. Again, in W.P.(C) 17973/2024 *vide* an order dated 13.01.2025, passed on an application preferred for vacation of the aforesaid order dated 24.12.2024, the stand of the Union of India viz. TFI (petitioner herein) was recorded as under:

“17. Since, the learned counsel for UOI has submitted in these proceedings that TFI has been recognized as the National Sports Federation (NSF) for the sport of Taekwondo and yet not been de-recognised (although the recognition is stated to be under review), it would be apposite that the fresh open selection trials are conducted under the aegis of the TFI. However, a representative of IOA and/or GTCC shall be entitled to remain present and oversee the conduct of the trials.”

35. Thus, the contention that the petitioner was not granted renewal as the NSF in the year 2024 cannot be sustained on account of the aforesaid observations made by this Court in the aforesaid orders dated 24.12.2024 and 13.01.2025 passed in W.P.(C) 17973/2024 and especially considering stand on behalf of the Union of India, as recorded in the order dated 13.01.2025.

36. Further, it is also important to take note of the provisions of the Sports Code as regards recognition of NSFs. In this regard, the Sports Code prescribes as under:

“8. Recognition of National Sports Federations

8.1 The purpose of this is to ensure that NSFs maintain certain basic standards, norms and procedures with regard to their internal functioning, which conform to the high principles and objectives laid down by the concerned International Federation, and which are also in complete consonance with the principles laid down in the Olympic Charter or in the constitution of the Indian Olympic Association while being compliant with Government guidelines applicable to NSFs.

8.2 From the year December, 2009, a new system of annual recognition was notified under which NSFs are required to submit detailed documentation for grant of recognition, which would get automatically



*renewed in the subsequent years subject to submission of prescribed documents such as annual report, audited accounts, details of national championships held, utilization certificate in respect of Government grants. Copies of relevant circulars issued vide No.F.9-69/2009-SP-I dated 12.11.2009, 02.12.2009 & 29.11.2010 are placed at **Annexure-XV**. Federations not availing of grants from the Government will receive permanent recognition instead of annual recognition.*

*8.3 NSF's seeking recognition will have to apply as per Guidelines given at **Annexure-II**. While considering the proposals for recognition, the Ministry, inter alia, will be guided by the following:*

- i. The current legal status of the Organization*
- ii. Recognition by the International Federation and the Asian Federation.*
- iii. Recognition by the IOA in respect of Olympic Sports*
- iv. Undisputed status as an Apex Body in India*
- v. All India spread.*
- vi. The role and contribution of the organization in promoting and developing Sports in India.*
- vii. Conduct of national championships across age groups and gender*
- viii. Financial and managerial accountability.*
- ix. Fair, transparent and democratic elections.*
- x. Compliance with age and tenure limit guidelines.*
- xi. Protection and promotion of players' interests and welfare.*

8.4 For determining the eligibility for recognition of NSF's dealing with disciplines which are not included in Olympics, Commonwealth Games or Asian Games, the Government has further notified additional conditions. Now while considering the proposal of such disciplines following criteria will be taken into consideration:-

- i. Popular Indigenous Games with All India spread*
- ii. Popular School, College and University Sports*
- iii. Likelihood of inclusion in major international games like Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games, etc.*



iv. Availability of required infrastructure

v. Affordability of the game

vi. Availability of coaches

A copy O.M. issued vide No.F.9-6/98-SP-II/SP-I (Vol.II) dated 11.06.2010 is placed at **Annexure-XXXIX**.

8.5 The Ministry reserves the right to suspend or withdraw the recognition of NSF, in the event of serious irregularities being detected in their internal functioning. The procedure and consequences of suspension and de-recognition are indicated at **Annexure III**.”

37. While it is true that Clause 8.2 of the Sports Code specifically speaks of automatic renewal of recognition subject to submission of prescribed documents (which, *inter alia*, include “document in support of recognition of International / Asian Body”), paragraph 8.5 of the Sports Code, read with Annexure III thereto, specifically prescribes the procedure for suspension/de-recognition of an NSF. The said Annexure III reads as under:-

**“PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION/WITHDRAWAL OF
RECOGNITION AND CONSEQUENCES THEREOF**

I. SUSPENSION

In the event that serious irregularities in the functioning of a National Sports Federation are detected, the recognition of a Federation will be suspended as an interim measure until a complete and full inquiry is completed. The grounds for suspension will be as follows:

- (i) Suspension by the concerned International or Asian Federation on any grounds whatsoever.*
- (ii) Suspension by the IOA.*
- (iii) Legal action taken against a NSF by the concerned Registrar of Societies or other legal authority.*
- (iv) Failure to hold elections as prescribed in the Constitution of the NSF or in accordance with the government guidelines or gross irregularities in election procedures.*
- (v) Failure to submit annual audited accounts, as prescribed.*
- (vi) Misuse, or unauthorised diversion, of Government assistance.*
- (vii) Failure to provide accurate information to the Department as and when called for.*
- (viii) Failure to abide by the conditions upon which recognition has been granted.*



- (ix) Non-compliance with the conditionalities laid down by the Government.*
- (x) On a report from the concerned Registrar of Societies alleging gross irregularities in the internal functioning of NSF.*
- (xi) In the public interest, in the event of any other serious irregularities being detected.*
- (xii) Non-renewal of annual recognition due to default on the part of the NSF*

II. WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION:

Recognition may be withdrawn in case of any of the following:

- (i) the same has been obtained by misrepresentation of material information or by fraudulent means;*
 - (ii) violation of the terms and conditions of recognition or of Government Guidelines or of the provisions of their own constitution;*
 - (iii) in the judgment of the Government of India, the Federation is not functioning in the best interest of development of sports for which the Federation was granted recognition;*
 - (iv) an inquiry confirms serious irregularities regarding the functioning of the Federation;*
 - (v) the concerned International or Asian Federation permanently derecognises or disaffiliates a National Federation. Similarly, derecognition may take place in the event that the IOA permanently derecognises or disaffiliates National Federation.*
- Before withdrawal of recognition, the concerned NSF will however, be given reasonable opportunity to present their defence.*

III. CONSEQUENCES OF SUSPENSION/WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION

Upon withdrawal of recognition the NSF will cease to exercise the functions of the NSF for the concerned sport discipline. It shall forego the right to regulate and control the sport in India and select the national teams and represent India in international sports events and forums. It will also become ineligible to use India in its name or receive any benefit or concession meant for an NSF as detailed in clause 3.6 of the National Sports Development Code 2011.”

38. Notably, in terms of the aforesaid Annexure III, “non-renewal of annual recognition due to default on the part of NSF” is subsumed within the expression ‘suspension of recognition’. The said Annexure III also contemplates that where the recognition of a federation is ‘suspended’, the



same shall be in the nature of an interim measure until a thorough and full inquiry is completed. Further, Annexure III of the Sports Code goes on to provide that “before withdrawal of recognition, the concerned NSF will, however, be given reasonable opportunity to present their defence”.

39. Therefore, the provisions of the Sports Code leaves no manner of doubt that any suspension or “non-renewal” or withdrawal of recognition *inter alia* on the ground of non-recognition by the International Federation / Asian Body, must be predicated on adherence to procedural safeguards as contemplated under Annexure III thereof.

40. However, in the present case, neither a specific notice appears to have been given to the petitioner putting it to notice as regards suspension / withdrawal of its recognition nor has any order been issued by the respondent no.1 purporting to suspend / withdraw the recognition of the petitioner. Instead, the Union of India/MYAS, went ahead and issued the impugned communication letter dated 08.05.2025 seeking to recognize the respondent no.3 (India Taekwondo) as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India. The same is clearly incongruous inasmuch as Clause 3.10 of the Sports Code clearly contemplates that there will be only one recognized federation for each discipline of sport. Clause 3.10 of the Sports Code reads as under:

“3.10 At the National level, there will be only one recognised federation for each discipline of sport. Only the duly recognised National Sports Federation would be entitled to financial grants as admissible. Only one State/UT Association from each State/UT shall be admitted as a member of the Federation, provided it has a minimum of 50% of the District level Associations affiliated to it. Any organisation of an all India standing and connected with the Sport may be given the status as that of a State or that of a U.T. and admitted as affiliated Member. Other categories of membership may also be given, but while each affiliated State/UT Unit shall have a right to cast vote in the General Body Meetings, no other



class of Member(s) shall have any right to vote, in the Federation's meetings. While granting recognition/affiliation to a State /UT Association, the National Federation should take into consideration the representative character of the State/UT Association so as to ensure that only truly representative body of the game gets the recognition/affiliation.”

41. In the circumstances, the impugned order dated 08.05.2025 is clearly unsustainable inasmuch as it is: -

- i. inconsistent with the order dated 17.03.2023 passed by the Union of India/MYAS (Annexure P-10), whereby, the petitioner was recognized as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in India;
- ii. in the teeth of the position recorded in the orders dated 24.12.2024 and 13.01.2025 in W.P.(C) 17973/2024 passed by this Court, which expressly records the stand of the Union of India that the petitioner is the recognized NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in the country; the same belies the stand now sought to be taken in these proceedings that the petitioner's status as NSF was “not renewed” in the year 2024;
- iii. in contravention of Annexure III of the Sports Code which contemplates that non-renewal / suspension / withdrawal of recognition will be preceded by procedural due process; and
- iv. inconsistent with Clause 3.10 of the Sports Code inasmuch as there exists no formal order (after following procedural due process) passed by the MYAS, suspending/withdrawing the recognition of the petitioner. In absence thereof, conferring status of an NSF to the respondent no.3, results in infraction of the said Clause 3.10.

42. It is also noticed that there is a serious controversy surrounding the manner in which the respondent no.3 was incorporated and / or came to be accorded recognition by the International Body. It is alleged that the



respondent no.3 was incorporated at the behest of certain person/s who were part of the *ad-hoc* Committee constituted by the IOA *vide* order dated 12.07.2019 to administer the sport of Taekwondo in the Country.

43. It is contended that it is wholly unethical for any member of an *ad-hoc* Committee to seek to incorporate a body and using its position as the member therein to exert influence on an international body in order to accord recognition thereto. It is further submitted that such conduct was resorted to by the main protagonist of the respondent no.3, who virtually staged a 'coup', with the objective of 'taking over' the sport of Taekwondo in India. It has been also pointed out that Ethics Commission of the IOA/respondent no.2 *vide* an order dated 08.02.2022 has also passed a scathing order in this respect (even though the said order was not formally approved by the Executive Committee of the IOA).

44. In the opinion of this Court, all these are relevant circumstances required to be considered by the MYAS/respondent no.1 before taking an appropriate decision as to which body deserves to be the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in the country. The records of the case do not reveal that the aforesaid relevant circumstances were considered. On the contrary, the impugned order is merely predicated on the fact that the respondent no.3 enjoys the recognition of the International Federation and Asian Body.

45. Clearly, recognition of an NSF cannot be at the dictates/whims/directives of any International Federation. The MYAS is not expected to act as a mere 'rubber stamp' and grant recognition to whichever body / entity is handpicked by the International Federation (irrespective of antecedents/track record/conflict of interest issues afflicting such body).

46. In ***Bajrang Punia and Ors. vs. Union of India and Ors***, 2024 SCC



OnLine Del 5622, this Court observed as under:-

“34. This Court also finds that the possibility of reprisal/ disapproval by the International body (UWW) cannot afford any valid justification for not implementing the order dated 24.12.2023 or in constituting an Ad-hoc committee in terms of the request made by the MYAS to the IOA. Considering that it is the stand of the MYAS itself that the order dated 24.12.2023, and the consequential request for constituting an ad-hoc committee, has been validly and justifiably made in accordance with law, there is no reason for the MYAS to adopt a passive approach which undermines its own orders/ decisions. The remote possibility of the UWW taking umbrage ought never prevent the MYAS from doing what it must to implement good governance practices consistent with the NSDCI, 2011, and the law of the land.

35. It has also been rightly pointed out that in the past, in the context of some other NSFs, similar apprehensions of adverse action on account of perceived “governmental interference” or “third party interference”, could be allayed through a process of co-operative and interactive engagement with the concerned international federations.

36. It is well settled that adherence to good governance practices, as duly incorporated in the regime of the NSDCI, 2011, is part of the law of the land. In this regard, reference may be made to the observations of a Division Bench of this Court in **Indian Olympic Association vs. Union of India**, 2014 SCC OnLine Del 2967 wherein it has been held as under:

“72. An added reason why the petitioners’ argument has to fail is that even otherwise, the laws of the land – as well as norms which are binding upon citizens and entities such as the petitioners when they engage with the state or seek its aid or assistance – must prevail in a uniform and non-arbitrary manner. Surely, neither IOA nor any NSF can complain that the operation of provisions of law, which affect their functioning, such as grant of tax exemptions, state policies enabling them to claim access to resources, labour and employment laws and a host of general laws applicable to all others would apply. The argument of governance autonomy in such cases cannot prevail over those principles and provisions of law or norms uniformly made applicable to all, who might access those very resources. The ruling in *The Ahmedabad St. Xaviers College Society v. State of Gujarat*, AIR 1974 S. C. 1389 is, in this context, instructive as well as significant. The Supreme Court held that the seemingly absolute nature of a linguistic or religious minority community to establish and administer an educational institution of its choice, under Article 30 of the Constitution of India, does not extend to an entitlement to claim affiliation without fulfilling the



prescribed conditions, or immunity from observation of general laws or policies which have to be applied.

73. State or social concern in regard to regulation of sports can be achieved, inter alia, through the method of requiring certain definitive policies to be followed by the NSFs and the IOA to ensure its representative character, aimed at the larger common good in the world of sport and to avoid development of cliques or cabals in sporting federations or bodies. Such cabals beget not only concentration of power, but thrive in opaqueness in all their dealings- functioning, finances and most importantly selection of sportspersons to represent the country in the concerned field of sport. The overriding concern of the Central Government in ensuring that the decision making are by bodies which such cabals operate, is sought to be achieved by such tenure restrictions. So long as the Central Government has the authority to recognize the national sporting federations and the IOA, even for the purpose of funding and declaring which of them is entitled to use the national emblem or use the term “India”, insistence on such regulations, is legitimate. The important aspect here is that the Central Government, through the Code is not saying that absent such compliance, there would be any deprivation of an existing right; all that it suggests is that if recognition and funding for various purposes is sought (towards travel, boarding and lodging, coaching facilities, tax exemptions, etc) the NSF has to comply with these guidelines. In other words, it is not as if the violation of such norms leads to any adverse consequence, in the form of a penal sanction, or blacklisting. The body simply cannot claim to select a team that represents “India” or hold itself out as “Team India”. The Petitioner’s argument that Sports Code provisions are unenforceable, as they are not “law” therefore, is without merit.”

37. As such, insistence on compliance with the law of the land (which includes NSDCI, 2011) cannot be construed as “governmental interference” or “third party interference” so as to invite any adverse action from the international body.

38. It is also relevant to note that every international federation which is managing and administering an Olympic discipline has a mandatory pre-requisite eligibility criteria for affiliation, that the concerned national federation has to be a duly affiliated member of the concerned National Olympic Committee (NOC) i.e. Indian Olympics Association (IOA) in case of India.

39. In the instant case, the respondent no. 2/WFI being an NSF for the sport of wrestling in India is a duly affiliated member of the Indian



Olympic Association (IOA). A perusal of the Constitution of IOA reveals that it contains the following provisions:

“25.2 The Indian Olympic Association shall be governed in accordance with the IOA Constitution, the Olympic Charter and the law of land.”

40. As such, adherence to the “law of land” (which includes NSDCI, 2011 and other provisions of Indian law) is mandated on account of the Constitution of the National Olympic Committee (IOA) itself. Also, Article 26.1.5 of the Constitution of IOA recognizes that an NSF may have to suffer loss of recognition due to non-adherence with the “international or national sports code”. The said stipulation reads as under:-

“26.1. The I.O.A General Assembly, either directly or through the IOA Executive Council, is entitled to consider disaffiliation/de-recognition/suspension of the National Sports Federation/State Olympic Associations on one or more of the under mentioned grounds, after ensuring that a Show Cause Notice has been served and an explanation has been obtained and considered from the organization recommended for disaffiliation/ de-recognition/ suspension.

26.1.1 Non-observance of directives issued by the Indian Olympic Association from time to time.

26.1.2 Not holding elections after the completion of the normal tenure for which the officer bearers are elected.

26.1.3. Not submitting annual audited statement of accounts, annual report and list of current officer-bearers within the stipulated time period.

26.1.4 Disaffiliation/De-recognition by the International Federation of the Sports.

26.1.5 Loss of recognition due to non-adherence under the international or national sports code

41. For all the above reasons, any apprehension of action/reprisal by the international body, need not deter the MYAS from enforcing its order dated 24.12.2023, if so warranted (unless the said order dated 24.12.2023 is itself recalled or reviewed). Also, in any event, since the Paris Olympic Games 2024 is already over, there is no reason why the respondent no.1 should feel constrained in taking / implementing requisite decision/s as to whether the suspension qua respondent no.2 is required to continue or not and/or whether there needs to be an ad-hoc committee for managing the affairs of respondent no.2.

47. In the circumstances, the impugned order dated 08.05.2025 is set



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aside.

48. The Union of India is directed to reconsider the matter as regards recognition of a suitable body to act as the NSF for the sport of Taekwondo in the country, after affording an opportunity of hearing all the stakeholders including the petitioner and the respondent no.3 and thereafter take an appropriate decision by issuing a reasoned order, in consonance with the Sports Code and good governance practices. Let the same be done expeditiously.

49. Till the aforesaid exercise is completed, for all the above reasons, and in line with the orders dated 24.12.2024 and 13.01.2025 passed in W.P.(C) 17973/2024, the petitioner shall continue to act as the NSF in respect of the sport of Taekwondo in India.

50. The petition stands disposed of in the above terms. Pending application/s also stands disposed of.

SACHIN DATTA, J

NOVEMBER 18, 2025

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