



P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

5. National Anti-Doping Act Amendments – Criminalising Organised Doping Networks – National

1. Why in News

1. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports placed proposed amendments to National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 for public consultation
2. Amendments seek to criminalise organised doping activities targeting traffickers, syndicates, coaches, suppliers
3. Focus shifts from athletes testing positive to organised networks facilitating doping
4. Stricter protection for minors (athletes below 18 years)
5. Strengthens India's credibility in international sports, enhances sports governance integrity

2. About Doping

Definition

1. Use of prohibited performance-enhancing substances or methods by athletes to gain unfair competitive advantage

Global Governance

1. Governed globally by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) established 1999
2. **WADA Prohibited List covers –**
 1. Anabolic steroids (muscle building)
 2. Erythropoietin/EPO (enhancing oxygen-carrying capacity)
 3. Stimulants (enhancing alertness, endurance)
 4. Diuretics (masking other substances)
 5. Masking agents (hiding prohibited substances in tests)
 6. Blood transfusions, gene doping

India's Framework

1. **NADA (National Anti-Doping Agency)** – Implements anti-doping framework
2. **NDTL (National Dope Testing Laboratory)** – Conducts testing, scientific analysis
3. India signatory to UNESCO International Convention Against Doping in Sport
4. National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 – First legislative backing for anti-doping efforts

3. Key Proposed Amendments

Criminalisation of Organised Doping Activities

1. Focus shifts from athletes alone to organised networks involved in doping activities
2. Recognizes doping as organized crime requiring criminal law response

Punishment for Trafficking and Supply

1. Illegal trafficking, supply, distribution of banned substances for doping purposes may attract criminal penalties
2. Targeting supply chain rather than end users (athletes)

Liability of Support Personnel

1. Coaches, trainers, doctors, support staff knowingly administering prohibited substances may face legal action
2. Accountability for entire support ecosystem around athletes

Protection of Minors

1. Supplying prohibited substances to athletes below 18 years proposed to attract stricter punishment
2. Recognizing vulnerability of young athletes to exploitation

Action Against Organised Commercial Operations

1. Organised syndicates promoting, profiting from doping activities may face criminal liability
2. Targeting commercial incentives driving doping networks

Regulation of Sale and Promotion

1. Selling unlabelled/mislabelled prohibited substances penalized
2. Promoting doping through advertisements would attract penalties
3. Addressing digital promotion of doping products

4. Reasons Why Doping Persists in India

Contaminated Supplements

1. Supplement market poorly regulated; substandard products reach athletes easily
2. Athletes, support staff fail checking ingredients against WADA prohibited list
3. Cross-contamination during manufacturing (legitimate products contaminated with banned substances)

Ignorance and Low Awareness

1. Many grassroots athletes unaware of which substances banned
2. Limited education at grassroots level
3. Language barriers preventing access to information

Socioeconomic Pressure

1. Sports often only exit route from poverty for rural athletes
2. Post-sports benefits (government jobs, quotas, financial incentives) creating pressure to perform at any cost
3. High stakes-low resources combination making shortcuts tempting

Systemic and Institutional Gaps

1. NADA had no legislative backing until National Anti-Doping Act 2022 (operated without statutory authority)
2. Limited WADA-accredited labs in India; delays in testing turnaround
3. Insufficient trained anti-doping personnel at grassroots level
4. Weak enforcement against coaches, suppliers facilitating doping

Other Reasons

1. Normalization of doping in certain sports cultures
2. Digital availability of prohibited substances (online pharmacies, dark web)
3. Insufficient penalties previously deterring organized networks

5. Significance of Proposed Amendments

1. **Shifts focus** - From individual athletes to organised criminal networks
2. **Protects vulnerable athletes** - From exploitation by coaches, syndicates, suppliers
3. **Strengthens sports governance** - Comprehensive accountability across entire doping ecosystem
4. **Enhances India's credibility** - In international sports (India faces scrutiny for high doping violations)

5. **Aligns with global standards** – WADA Code 2021 emphasizing protection of clean athletes, targeting doping networks
6. **Deterrence** – Criminal penalties more effective deterrent than administrative sanctions

6. Key Anti-Doping Measures in India

National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)

1. Nodal agency responsible for –
 1. Anti-doping testing
 2. Investigations
 3. Awareness programmes
 4. Implementation of anti-doping rules
2. Established 2005; legislative backing under National Anti-Doping Act 2022

National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL)

1. Conducts scientific analysis of athlete samples
2. Supports anti-doping enforcement
3. WADA-accredited laboratory (one of few in India)

Know Your Medicine App

1. Digital platform developed by NADA
2. Helps athletes identify medicines containing prohibited substances
3. Addresses inadvertent doping due to ignorance

Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE)

1. Allows athletes with genuine medical conditions to use otherwise prohibited substances
2. Under prescribed conditions with medical documentation
3. Prevents penalizing athletes for legitimate medical treatment

Other Measures

1. **Athlete Biological Passport (ABP)** – Longitudinal monitoring of biological markers detecting indirect doping
2. **Out-of-competition testing** – Testing athletes outside competition periods (when doping most likely)
3. **Whereabouts requirement** – Athletes providing location information for surprise testing
4. **Education programs** – Anti-doping education in sports academies, schools

7. Way Forward

1. Strengthen supplement regulation (mandatory certification, WADA-compliant labelling)
2. Expand WADA-accredited testing facilities across India
3. Grassroots awareness programs in regional languages
4. Train coaches, sports officials on anti-doping responsibilities
5. Fast-track prosecution under amended Act ensuring deterrence
6. International cooperation with WADA, foreign anti-doping agencies
7. Digital surveillance of online prohibited substance sales

8. Conclusion

Proposed amendments to National Anti-Doping Act 2022-mark significant shift from penalizing individual athletes to criminalizing organised doping networks (traffickers, syndicates, coaches, suppliers). Key amendments include criminalisation of organised doping activities, punishment for

trafficking—supply of prohibited substances, liability of support personnel knowingly administering substances, stricter protection for minors (below 18), action against commercial syndicates, regulation of unlabelled—mislabelled substances and doping advertisements. Doping persists due to contaminated unregulated supplements, ignorance among grassroots athletes, socioeconomic pressure to perform (government jobs, quotas), systemic gaps (NADA lacking legislative backing until 2022, limited WADA-accredited labs). Significance includes protecting vulnerable athletes from exploitation, strengthening sports governance, enhancing India's international credibility, aligning with WADA Code 2021. Anti-doping framework—NADA, NDTL, Know Your Medicine App, TUE mechanism—requires strengthening through supplement regulation, expanded testing facilities, grassroots education, and effective prosecution ensuring fair play, clean sport, and athlete welfare.

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