

SC SEEKS GOVT. VIEW ON MAKING SPORTS A RIGHT

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Human resources, Youth, Sports and related issues

The Supreme Court has asked the Centre and States to respond to a report recommending sports to be expressly made a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution.

The report submitted by the *amicus curiae*, senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, suggested that the “narrow” phrase ‘sport’ be replaced by ‘physical literacy’, which is a term “firmly established as a right in the leading sporting nations of the world”.

A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao has directed the Centre to respond to the report’s view to establish a ‘National Physical Literacy Mission’ to “give effect to the right by establishing and implementing a responsibilities matrix that includes curriculum design, compliance monitoring, and review, grievance redress and self-correction mechanisms” which starts at the school level to groom children for various sports.

“All school boards, including CBSE, ICSE, State Boards, IB, IGCSE, should be directed to ensure that from the academic year, at least 90 minutes of every school day will be dedicated to free play and games,” Mr. Sankaranarayanan’s report in the apex court recommended.

Time given

The report suggested that State governments ought to ensure that from the current academic year, “all non-residential colleges and schools should compulsorily allow access during non-working hours to neighbourhood children to use sports facilities for free, subject to basic norms of identification, security and care”. The report opined that 180 days’ time should be given to educational institutions to publish a ‘Physical Literacy Policy’ and create a committee to address cases where there is a failure in responsibilities to deliver the right to physical literacy of students.

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