

Bill Summary

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025

- The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was introduced in Lok Sabha on July 23, 2025. The Bill seeks to amend the National Anti-Doping Act, 2022. Doping is the consumption of certain prohibited substances by athletes to enhance performance. The Act gives effect to the UNESCO convention against doping in sports. It prohibits doping in sports, and provides a framework for testing, enforcement, and adjudication of violations. It establishes the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) to implement anti-doping rules. It also establishes the National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports to oversee activities of NADA and advise the central government on anti-doping regulations.
- **Central government empowered to constitute the Appeal Panel:** The Act requires the National Board to constitute: (i) a Disciplinary Panel to determine the consequences of rule violations, and (ii) an Appeal Panel to hear appeals against decisions of the Disciplinary Panel. The Bill transfers the power to constitute the Appeal Panel from the Board to the central government. The Act empowers the Board to specify the manner of filing and hearing appeals through regulations. The Bill instead empowers the central government to prescribe these details.
- **Autonomy of Anti-Doping Bodies:** The Act empowers the National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports to obtain any information from the Disciplinary Panel and the Appeal Panel regarding their operations. It may also issue directions to these panels for the effective discharge of their functions. The Bill removes these powers. The Bill adds that the director general or any other member of NADA will have operational independence from: (i) any national or international sports federation, (ii) Olympic or Paralympic Committee, (iii) any government department, and (iv) any agency responsible for sports or anti-doping.
- **Only specified bodies may file appeal to CAS:** The Act allows any person to file an appeal before the Court of Arbitration of Sports (CAS) in Switzerland, against a decision of the Appeal Panel. The Bill specifies persons who may file an appeal before CAS. These include bodies such as the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), and international sports federations.
- **Direct appeal to CAS in specified cases:** In cases involving international-level athletes or events, the Bill permits direct appeal to CAS against a decision of the Disciplinary Panel. Persons who may file such an appeal are the affected athlete, NADA, the international federation, WADA, IOC, and IPC. The Bill also allows WADA to file a direct appeal before CAS against a final decision by NADA. This will be allowed if no other party has filed an appeal against that decision in India.
- **Anti-doping rule violations:** The Act specifies a list of conduct or circumstances as anti-doping rule violations. These include: (i) presence of prohibited substances or their markers in an athlete's body, (ii) use, attempted use, or possession of prohibited substances or methods, and (iii) whereabouts failure which includes failing to provide information about location or not being available for a test. The Bill instead refers to the World Anti-Doping Code for the definition of whereabouts failure. It also includes the article on anti-doping rule violations under the Code in a schedule, and states that it will have the force of law.
- **Mandatory accreditation of testing labs:** The Act empowers the central government to recognise dope testing labs in India. The Act states that a lab may obtain accreditation from WADA, if required. The Bill mandates that every lab must obtain and maintain accreditation from WADA.
- **Review of standards in adverse test report:** The Act specifies that NADA may direct any athlete to submit samples for testing if it believes that the athlete has committed an anti-doping rule violation. It requires NADA to carry out an initial review of any adverse sample report. The Bill adds that during the report review, NADA must also verify whether an adverse test report was caused by a departure from WADA's standards for labs, testing, and investigations.

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