

W.P.(MD) No.20012 of 2025

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BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

Reserved on	28.07.2025
Pronounced on	30.07.2025

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE C. SARAVANAN

W.P.(MD) No.20012 of 2025

and

W.M.P.(MD) No.15407 of 2025

Sivakumar

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Additional Chief Secretary
to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Department of Sports,
Development and Youth Welfare,
Secretariate, Chennai.

2.The Secretary,
The Selection Committee,
Directorate of Medical Education
and Research,
No.162, Periyar EVR High Road,
Kilpauk, Chennai 600 010.

3.The Member Secretary / Chief
Executive Officer,
Sports Development Authority
of Tamil Nadu,
Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium,
Raja Muthiah Road,
Periyemet, Chennai.

... Respondents



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PRAYER : Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents to award 900 marks to the petitioner's daughter Harini (NEET Roll Number 4124107066) for recognized International Achievement in the selection process of 2025-2026 medical college admission and consider her candidature based on this mark.

For Petitioner : Mr.P.Ganapathy Subramanian

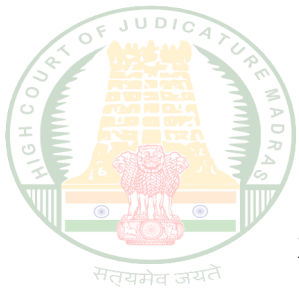
For R1 : Mr.P.T.Thiraviam
Government Advocate

For R2 : M/s.M.Sneha
Standing Counsel

For R3 : M/s.N.S.Tanvi
Standing Counsel

ORDER

This Writ Petition has been filed for issuance of a Writ of Mandamus to direct the respondents to award 900 marks to the petitioner's daughter, Harini (NEET Roll No. 4124107066), for her achievements in both international and national sporting events, in the selection process for medical college admissions for the academic year 2025–2026, and to consider her candidature based on the said marks.

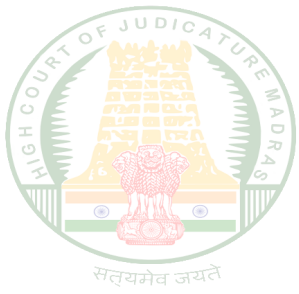


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2. It is submitted that the petitioner's daughter has been awarded only 200 marks for her participation in the national-level competition, instead of 900 marks for securing a gold medal at the Second Asian Shooting Ball Championship held in Nepal on 01.02.2025 and 02.02.2025, and a bronze medal at the First World Cup Shooting Ball Championship held in New Delhi between 02.03.2024 and 03.03.2024.

3. The petitioner's daughter has been awarded 100 marks for participating in the national tournament held at Odisha from 17.01.2025 to 19.01.2025, and another 100 marks for participating in the national tournament held at Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, from 29.03.2024 to 31.03.2024.

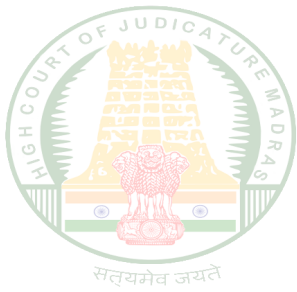
4. The learned counsel for the petitioner further submits that, all along since 2020, for international tournaments falling under Category-II, the requirement was a minimum participation of six countries in tournaments that were not covered under Category-I. It is submitted that only requirement was that such tournaments should have been approved by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), the Sports Authority of India (SAI), and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS).



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WEB COPY 5. The specific case of the petitioner is that, since the petitioner's daughter has secured a gold medal and a bronze medal in the international tournaments mentioned above, she is entitled to 900 marks (500 + 400), as per Annexure VII of the Prospectus for Admission to MBBS/BDS Degree Courses in Tamil Nadu Government Medical/Dental Colleges, Government Quota Seats in Self-Financing Medical/Dental Colleges, ESIC Medical College, K.K. Nagar, Chennai, affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Dr.M.G.R. Medical University and State Private Universities 2025-2026 Session, issued by the second respondent, Selection Committee, Directorate of Medical Education and Research (hereinafter referred to as the 'Prospectus for the 2025–2026 Session').

6. In support of the present writ petition, the petitioner has placed reliance on the dictionary meaning of the term *athlete*. It is submitted that the shooting ball event is a team event and not an individual athletic event. It is therefore submitted that the requirement of participation in an event involving at least seven different countries will not apply to the shooting ball event. A reference is made to the following definition from the Oxford Dictionary, which reads as under:



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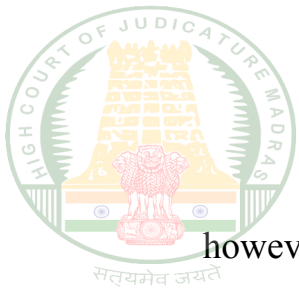
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Athlete -

1. a person who competes in sport
2. a person who competes in sports such as running and jumping
3. a person who is good at sports and physical experience

7. The learned counsel for the petitioner referred to the 1980 Moscow Olympics – Men's Field Hockey Participation and Results, wherein it was concluded that, to ensure a valid tournament, six teams participated, although originally twelve teams were expected. It is submitted that Nine nations, including Pakistan, West Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, and Argentina, withdrew due to the boycott.

8. It is submitted that, during the current year, as per the general guidelines for Category-II international tournaments, eligibility requires participation **in an event involving** at least seven different countries, and such competitions must be approved by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), the Sports Authority of India (SAI), and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS). It is submitted that the above departure,



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however, does not justify the denial of marks to the petitioner's daughter as per Annexure II of the Prospectus for the 2025–2026 Session issued by the second respondent.

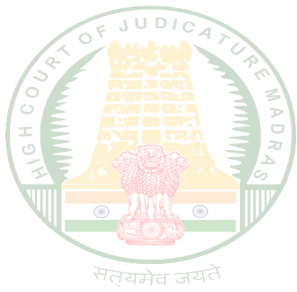
9. The learned counsel for the petitioner placed reliance on the following judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and the Division Bench of this Court:

- i. In ***S.Krishna Sradha Vs. State of Andhra Pradesh and others***, reported in (2020) 17 SCC 465.
- ii. In the case of ***V.Periyadurai Vs. The Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare and others***, passed by the Division Bench of this Court vide order dated 20.07.2017 rendered in W.P(MD)No.5209 of 2017.

10. On the other hand, the learned Standing Counsel for the third respondent has referred to the IOC Code of Ethics, wherein the expression *participant* has been defined as follows:

“14. “Participant” means any natural or legal person belonging to one of the following categories:

a. “Athlete” means any person or group of persons, competing or accredited to compete in a competition;



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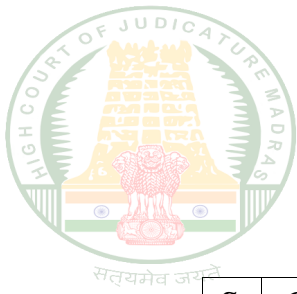
b. “Athlete support personnel” means any coach, trainer, manager, agent, team staff, team official, medical or paramedical personnel working with or treating athletes participating in or preparing for competitions, and all other persons working with the athletes;

c.....”

11. The learned Standing Counsel for the second respondent submits that the petitioner's daughter was awarded 100 marks based on the assessment made by the third respondent, who is responsible for assessing and awarding marks in connection with the examinations.

12. I have considered the arguments advanced by the learned counsel for the petitioner, the learned Government Advocate for the first respondent, the learned Standing Counsel for the second respondent and the learned Standing Counsel for the third respondent.

13. In the international Shooting Ball tournaments held in New Delhi and Nepal, the petitioner's daughter, along with her team, secured a bronze medal and a gold medal, as detailed below:



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S. No	Competitions	Achievement	Number of countries, which participated in the event	Number of Team participated	Date, Year and Place	Marks
1	1 st Shooting Ball World Cup (Form-1)	3 rd Place Bronze	5 of required 7 countries	6 *	30.03.2024 & New Delhi	400
2	2 nd Asian Shooting Ball Championship (Form-I)	1 st Place Gold	3 of required 7 countries	4 *	02.02.2025 & Nepal	500

* Two teams for India

14. Shooting Ball is an indigenous Indian sport. There is no doubt that the petitioner's daughter participated in the above mentioned Shooting Ball competition.

15. For awarding 900 marks for securing a gold medal and a bronze medal in the two tournaments mentioned above, the Prospectus for the 2025-2026 Session contemplates that the event should involve at least seven different countries. According to the petitioner, invitations were sent to more than seven countries. However, participation was limited to five countries and three countries in the respective tournaments held in



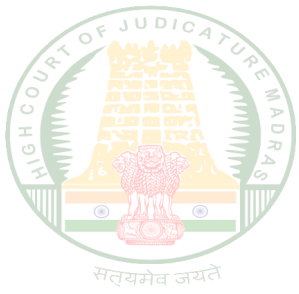
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New Delhi and Nepal, as other countries failed to reciprocate to the invitation.

16. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Dev Gupta Vs. PEC University of Technology and others***, reported in (2023) 20 SCC 166, has recently emphasised the object of introducing sports quota. It has held that the object is not only to accommodate academic merit, but also to promote sports in the institution, the university, and ultimately, in the country. It has held that universities and academics are the nurseries or the catchment for sportspersons, who can represent at the State, National, International level and Olympic level sports. It has therefore held that the State or educational institution can insist upon a minimum eligibility condition, so that meritorious sportspersons are not at a disadvantageous position. Paragraph 20 of the said order reads as under:

“20. The objective of introducing sports quota, however, is not to accommodate academic merit, but something altogether different : promotion of sports in the institution, the university, and ultimately, in the country. Among others, universities are the nurseries or the catchment for sportspersons, who can represent in State, national, international level and Olympic sports. At the same time, the State or educational institution can insist upon a minimum eligibility condition. That is not



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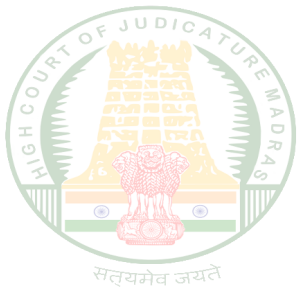


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to say that such condition would necessarily and mandatorily have to be what is applicable to general (or open category) candidates. The latter kind of criteria would tend to exclude meritorious sportspersons, and place the less (academically) meritorious sportspersons, at a disadvantageous position, because they (sic have to) satisfy the open category candidates' criterion of higher academic merit.”

17. The Division Bench of this Court in the case of ***V.Periyadurai Vs. The Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare and others***, dated 20.07.2017 rendered in W.P(MD)No.5209 of 2017, wherein, this Court has underscored the importance of reservation in sports. The paragraph No.3 has been held as under:

“3.The learned counsel for the writ petitioner pointed out that sports reservation in Tamil Nadu is meagre. Though the number of seats in Medical and Dental Colleges has been hiked periodically, the number of seats reserved for sports quota has remained constant. It is hardly necessary to emphasize the importance of sports. It is the duty of the State Government to give sufficient encouragement in this competitive World. Unless, there is some reservation for sports quota, students will not be encouraged to take up sports seriously. Therefore, we direct the respondents to consider the representation dated 06.06.2016 and pass appropriate orders within a peirod of four months from the date of receipt of a copy of this order.”



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18. The point for consideration in the present writ petition is whether the petitioner's daughter, who has secured a gold medal and a bronze medal in international sports events held at New Delhi and Nepal between 02.03.2024 and 03.03.2024, and between 01.02.2025 and 02.02.2025, respectively, is entitled to be awarded 900 marks, as averred in the affidavit filed in support of the writ petition.

19. The admitted position is that in the international tournament held at New Delhi on the dates mentioned above, 5 countries participated with 6 teams including 2 teams from India. Similarly, in Nepal, 3 countries with 4 teams participated.

20. The guidelines for international tournaments have been prescribed in paragraph 4(a) of Annexure VII to the Prospectus for the 2025-2026 Session, which deals with the allotment of seats for candidates under the Quota for Eminent Sports Persons for the 2025-2026 Session.

21. Paragraph 1 of Annexure VII to the Prospectus for the 2025-2026 Session makes it clear that the purpose of the quota is to recognise and give weightage to the sports eminence of the candidates,



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and hence, marks for sports achievements alone will be considered for ranking the candidates. The candidates are expected to continue their good performance in sports even after admission to the institution.

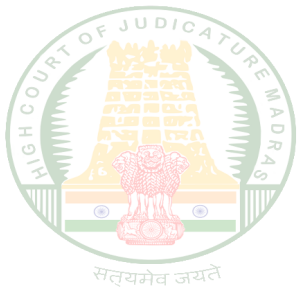
22. In Table (I), Table (II), Table (III), Table (IV), Table (V), and Table (V-A) in paragraph 3 of Annexure VII to the Prospectus for the 2025-2026 Session, the marks to be awarded for different competitions have been stipulated. The titles of the said Table (I), Table (II), Table (III), Table (IV), Table (V), and Table (V-A) are as follows:

ANNEXURE – VII

**ALLOTMENT OF SEATS FOR CANDIDATES
UNDER QUOTA FOR EMINENT SPORTS PERSONS
FOR 2025-2026 SESSION**

1.
2.
3.

Table (I)	Marks for Recognized International Achievement
Table (II)	Marks for Recognized National Achievement
Table (III)	Marks for Recognized State Championship and State Competition
Table (IV)	Marks for Recognized Regional Level Achievements
Table (V)	Marks for Recognized District Level Achievements



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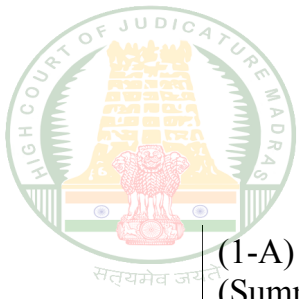


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Table (V-A)	Marks for University Level Competitions only for PG Admission
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23. This Court is concerned with the guidelines for international tournaments. The international tournaments have been divided into Three Categories. They are as follows:-

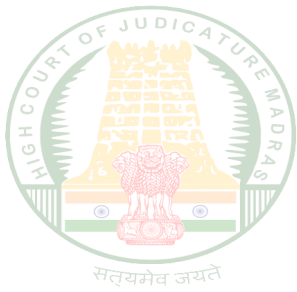
Category - I	Category - II	Category - III
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(1-A) Olympic Games (Summer/Winter), Youth Olympic Games (Summer/Winter). Commonwealth Games and Asian Games (Games organized in 4 years frequency by the International Olympic Committee).	World Championship, World Cup, Asian Championship, SAF Games (South Asian Games), Commonwealth Championship Organized in 2 years frequency by the International Sports Federation.	Asian Championships, Commonwealth Games, World cup, World Championship, Grand Prix, Grand slam - Organized in Every year by the International Sports Federation.
(1-B) World Championship, Commonwealth championship, World Cup- (organized in 4 Years frequency by the International Sports Federations). Eligibility for athletes requires participation in an event involving at least seven different countries and such competitions should have been approved by Indian Olympics Association (IOA), Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS).	Eligibility for athletes requires participation in an event involving at least seven different countries and such competitions should have been approved by Indian Olympics Association (IOA), Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS). Open or Invitational or Memorial or any indifferent nomenclature or title of tournaments or Championships at International level, not approved by any of the above authority will not be considered for marks.	Eligibility for athletes requires participation in an event involving at least seven different countries and such competitions should have been approved by Indian Olympics Association (IOA), Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), Government of India.

24. The petitioner's daughter participated in **Category II** Tournaments in New Delhi and Nepal. The relevant criteria for awarding marks under **Category II** is as follows:



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Table (I) - Marks for Recognized International Achievement

Sl. No.	Competition	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Participation
1.	International (Representing India Category – IA, IB) – Once in 4 years	1000	850	650	400
2.	International (Representing India Category – II) Once in 2 years	500	450	400	250
3.	International (Representing India Category - III) Once in Every Year	400	350	300	200

25. The Court is primarily concerned with the interpretation of the expression '**eligibility**' for Category II in paragraph 4(a) of Annexure VII to the Prospectus for the 2025-2026 Session.

26. Ordinarily, the expression 'athlete' would refer to a person who competes in sports such as running and jumping, though any person associated with sports can also be referred to as an 'athlete'.

27. As far as the IOC Code of Ethics, which has been relied upon by



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the learned Standing Counsel for the third respondent, is concerned, I am of the view that it cannot be applied to sporting events other than track events such as running, jumping, long jump, triple jump, hurdles, shot put, javelin throw, high wall, etc. These are individual events, and for this very purpose, the criterion has been prescribed as 'Eligibility for athletes. It requires participation in an event involving at least seven different countries'.

28. However, team games such as Shooting Ball, Volleyball, Football, Basketball, etc., cannot fall within the expression 'Eligibility for athletes requires participation in an event involving at least seven different countries' under Category II in paragraph 4(a) of Annexure VII to the Prospectus for the 2025-2026 Session.

29. The General Condition in paragraph 5(1) of Annexure VII to the Prospectus for the 2025–2026 Session states that, for consideration of candidates seeking admission under the category of eminent sportsperson, he/she should enclose all the attested photocopies of participation certificates and the relevant forms issued by the competent sports authorities. It further states that the application, along with all the sports



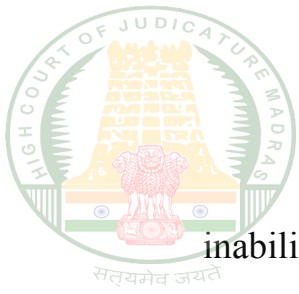
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certificates/relevant forms/documents as mentioned in paragraphs 4(a) and

5, should be presented for certificate verification.

30. The petitioner's daughter, as a participant in the international event, had no control over the number of teams that participated. Individual athletic events require a different level of fitness, and therefore, participation should involve at least seven different countries. Such competitions must be approved by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), the Sports Authority of India (SAI), and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS). The situation would have been different if the petitioner's daughter had participated in regular athletic events such as running, jumping, etc., as mentioned above, and the event did not involve participation by at least seven different countries. Therefore, the denial of marks would, at best, be subject to debate and dispute.

31. It has to be kept in mind that the pedagogy adopted by educational institutions rarely trains students with the required skills in any discipline. The education system is primarily intended to filter out those who do not fit the general criteria prescribed by the authorities, in view of the intense competition and limited number of vacancies and opportunities. This is an artificial demand on account of the State's



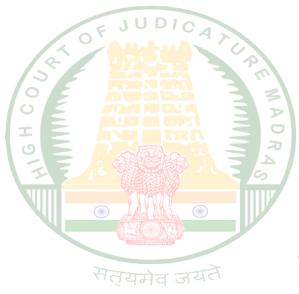
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inability to provide a fair opportunity to those who desire to equip themselves in a specific discipline.

32. The objective of the Prospectus for the 2025–2026 session issued by the second respondent is to be viewed as fostering sports to the advantage of the nation as a whole by promoting integration and fraternity among citizens to achieve the laudable objects enshrined in the constitution.

33. It is informed that similar conditions are not prescribed either in State-level tournaments, National-level tournaments, or even in the Olympics. Therefore, the aforesaid condition should not be imposed to the disadvantage of the petitioner's daughter to deny 900 marks.

34. Therefore, the involvement of the petitioner's daughter in competitive sports at the International level certainly deserves fair and reasonable recognition, considering that it is also a team event, which will indirectly help her perform well in the curriculum of the institution and in the larger curriculum of life.



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35. Therefore, I am of the view that the petitioner is entitled to the relief sought in this Writ Petition.

36. The respondents are, therefore, directed to permit the petitioner's daughter, Harini (NEET Roll Number 4124107066), to participate in the counselling and to award her 900 marks for her recognised international achievement in the sporting event.

37. Accordingly, this Writ Petition stands allowed. No costs. Consequently, the connected Miscellaneous Petition is closed.

30.07.2025

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Index : Yes / No

Internet : Yes / No

Neutral Citation : Yes/No

To

1.The Additional Chief Secretary,
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Secretariate, Chennai.

2.The Secretary,
The Selection Committee,
Directorate of Medical Education and Research,
No.162, Periyar EVR High Road,

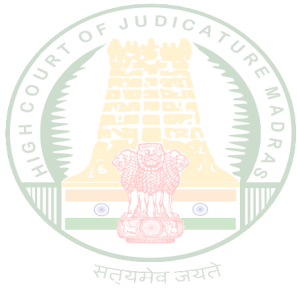


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Kilpauk, Chennai 600 010.

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3. The Member Secretary / Chief Executive Officer,
Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu,
Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium,
Raja Muthiah Road,
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C.SARAVANAN, J.

JEN

Pre-Delivery order made
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