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* IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

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Date of Decision: 15.06.2026

+ LPA 448/2026, CM APPL. 38798/2026, CM APPL. 38799/2026 & CM APPL. 38800/2026

AKSHAY MAHARA

.....Appellant

Through: Mr. Shrimay Mishra and Mr. Tushaar Nair, Advocates.

versus

UNION OF INDIA & ORS.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Udit Dedhiya, SPC along with Mr. Rahul Mourya, GP, Ms. Apurva Sachdev and Mr. Preyansh Gupta, Advocates for UoI.
Ms. Aashita Khanna and Mr. Ritwik Prakash, Advocates for R-2 (IOA).**CORAM:****HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE TEJAS KARIA****HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE MADHU JAIN****TEJAS KARIA, J. (ORAL)**

1. The present Letters Patent Appeal has been preferred against the order dated 29.05.2026 (“**Impugned Order**”) passed by the learned Single Judge in W.P.(C) 6977/2026 (“**Writ Petition**”), to the limited extent that, despite the matter being admittedly time-sensitive and despite the statement made on behalf of the Respondents that no names had been forwarded for Karate for the 2026 Asian Games (“**Asian Games**”) and that the relevant deadline had expired, no urgent protective direction was issued and the matter was directed to be listed on 06.07.2026.



2. Learned counsel for the Appellant submitted that the Appellant is an Indian Karate Athlete and filed the Writ Petition seeking directions for a fair, transparent, time-bound, and internationally compliant selection mechanism for Indian Karate athletes for the Asian Games and the 22nd Asian Senior Karate Championship.

3. It was submitted by the learned Counsel for the Appellant that the entry period for participation in Karate for the Asian Games is from May 2026 to July 2026 and unless urgent protective directions are issued prior to the closure of the said entry period, the Writ Petition may be rendered substantially infructuous. The limited grievance raised is that Indian Karate athletes are once again being deprived of a fair opportunity for consideration for the Asian Games on account of administrative inaction, unresolved governance issues in the sport of Karate, and the absence of a recognised National Sports Federation (“NSF”).

4. Learned counsel for the Appellant further submitted that Karate in India has, for several years, been affected by rival claims to governance and the absence of a recognised NSF. The consequences of such uncertainty have repeatedly been borne by athletes, who have thereby been prevented from participating in international events. In order to prevent a recurrence of such prejudice, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (“**Ministry**”) issued an order dated 23.02.2026 concerning the sport of Karate.

5. It was further submitted by the learned Counsel for the Appellant that by the said order, the Ministry requested Respondent No. 2 to constitute a transitory / *Ad-Hoc* Committee, in consultation with the concerned World Karate Federation (“**WKF**”), to oversee and manage the affairs of Karate, including the selection of athletes and the submission of entries for



participation of sportspersons in international events, until a suitable federation is recognised as the NSF. However, no such committee has, till date, been constituted or operationalised.

6. Learned counsel for the Appellant submitted that *vide* order dated 19.05.2026 passed in the Writ Petition, the learned Single Judge recorded that the Respondents shall look into the grievance of the Appellant and make an endeavour to provide a mechanism for selection of international entries for Karate. Despite the aforesaid direction, no mechanism has been put in place to redress the Appellant's grievance. Thereafter, the names of India's participants for the 22nd Asian Senior Karate Championship, Bali, Indonesia, appeared on the WKF online registration portal without any disclosed public notice, selection criteria, trial, minutes of selection, consultation with Respondent Nos. 1 to 3, or recourse to the transitory / *Ad-Hoc* mechanism contemplated by the Ministry's order dated 23.02.2026.

7. Learned counsel for the Appellant further submitted that, in view of the said subsequent development, the Appellant filed CM APPL. 37691/2026 in the Writ Petition seeking urgent interim directions, *inter alia*, a direction to Respondent Nos. 1 to 3 to formulate and notify a fair selection process for Karate before the closure of the entry period for the Asian Games. When CM APPL. 37691/2026 was taken up on 29.05.2026, it was stated on behalf of the Respondents that no names had been sent for Karate for the Asian Games and that the relevant date had already expired. The learned Single Judge, instead of passing any urgent protective direction, directed the Respondents to place their stand on affidavit before the next date of hearing and kept the matter listed on 06.07.2026.



8. Learned counsel for Respondent No. 1 submitted that the Union of India is acting to protect the interests of the athletes and that, pursuant thereto, the Ministry had issued an order dated 23.02.2026 directing Respondent No. 2 to constitute an *Ad-Hoc* Committee for the selection of Karate athletes until an NSF is recognised for the sport of Karate.

9. Learned counsel for Respondent No. 2 submitted that Respondent No. 2 has taken all possible steps to facilitate the participation of Karate athletes in the Asian Games, and that the President of Respondent No. 2 had addressed a letter dated 26.02.2026 to the WKF, pursuant to the Ministry's order dated 23.02.2026, requesting the formation of an *Ad-Hoc* Committee to oversee and manage the affairs of Karate in India until a duly recognised NSF is established, in order to protect the interests of Karate athletes in India. *Vide* letter dated 27.02.2026, the WKF firmly opposed the constitution of any *Ad-Hoc* Committee and stated that any team or athlete selected by any such *Ad-Hoc* Committee or body constituted by Respondent No. 2 would not be permitted to participate in any international event organised under the umbrella of the WKF.

10. Learned counsel for Respondent No. 2 further submitted that the President of Respondent No. 2 sent a letter dated 11.03.2026 to the Ministry, reiterating the contents of the WKF's letter dated 27.02.2026, and requested initiation of statutory proceedings for cancellation / suspension of unrecognised Karate bodies so as to prevent misrepresentation and protect athletes. Respondent No. 2 also reiterated to the Ministry its commitment to assist in operationalising a legally sustainable pathway for the eventual establishment of a duly constituted and fully compliant NSF for Karate in India.



11. Learned Counsel for Respondent No. 2 has submitted a copy of the Letters dated 26.02.2026, 27.02.2026 and 11.03.2026 and the same are directed to be taken on record.

12. We have heard learned counsel for the Parties.

13. The letters dated 26.02.2026 and 27.02.2026, placed on record by Respondent No. 2, demonstrate that Respondent No. 2 acted pursuant to the Ministry's order dated 23.02.2026 and addressed a communication to the WKF seeking the constitution of an *Ad-Hoc* Committee for the selection of athletes for the Asian Games. However, the WKF opposed the constitution of any such *Ad-Hoc* Committee for the selection of athletes for any international event held under its aegis.

14. The submission advanced on behalf of the Appellant that no *Ad-Hoc* Committee for the selection of Karate athletes for participation in the Asian Games was constituted pursuant to the Ministry's order dated 23.02.2026, thus is refuted by these letters dated 26.02.2026, 27.02.2026 and 11.03.2026, which make it evident that Respondent No. 2 had indeed made best efforts to secure the constitution of such a committee. However, the recognition of any such *Ad-Hoc* Committee was expressly opposed by the WKF, and athletes selected by any such committee would neither be recognised by the WKF nor permitted to participate in international events conducted under its aegis.

15. In the Impugned Order, the statement made by learned counsel for the Respondents to the effect that no names of players had been forwarded for the Asian Games was duly recorded, and the Respondents were directed to place their affidavits on record on all relevant aspects before the next date of hearing.



16. In view of the aforesaid analysis, the present Appeal is not maintainable, as the Impugned Order does not constitute a judgment appealable under Clause 10 of the Letters Patent.

17. However, before parting, we deem it appropriate to observe that the absence of a recognised NSF for Karate is detrimental to the development of the sport in India. Indian athletes stand adversely affected, as they are deprived of opportunities to participate in international events. Athletes ought not to be made to suffer on account of administrative inaction and unresolved governance issues. Their interests must remain paramount, and their opportunities to participate in international events cannot be permitted to be compromised due to disputes, regulatory uncertainty, or administrative failures.

18. Accordingly, the Respondents should endeavour to address the grievance raised by the Appellant and to provide an appropriate mechanism for selection and international entries in Karate until such time as a duly recognised NSF for Karate is constituted in India, in terms of the direction already issued by the learned Single Judge in the order dated 19.05.2026 passed in the Writ Petition.

19. In view of the above, the present Appeal, along with the pending Applications, stands dismissed with the aforesaid observations. There shall be no order as to costs.

TEJAS KARIA, J
(VACATION JUDGE)

MADHU JAIN, J
(VACATION JUDGE)

JUNE 15, 2026/ak/ap