

REPORT OF SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT LEAGUE

MATCHES FOR THE CRICKET SEASON 2024-25

1. By order dated 12.09.2024, the Hon'ble High Court appointed me as 'Supervisory Committee' to undertake the exercise of conducting league matches for the cricket season 2024-25. The order of the Hon'ble High Court was communicated to me by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA). I assumed charge on 15.10.2025. To familiarize with the systems adopted by HCA, I have visited the office of the HCA and interacted with the Office Bearers of HCA, the CEO and some of the staff members and obtained inputs from them on basic aspects concerning conducting of league matches
2. Without dwelling deep into the history concerning various aspects of functioning of HCA, suffice to note that, by order dated 14.02.2023, Hon'ble Supreme Court appointed Justice L Nageshwara Rao, former Judge of Supreme Court of India as Single-Member Committee to take over the management of HCA. The singlemember had established systems and procedures for conducting regular league matches by the HCA. The singlemember Committee was successful in conducting 847 league matches, undertaken coaching of selection Committee members and inducting of supporting staff members. In the Report submitted by Hon'ble Justice L



Nageshwara Rao, he has made certain recommendations, which are pending consideration of Hon'ble Supreme Court. It appears that the HCA gave undertaking before the Hon'ble Supreme Court to implement recommendations of Hon'ble Justice L Nageshwara Rao.

3. It appears, contrary to report of single-member Committee and the undertaking given before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, certain decisions were taken by the HCA, challenging the same instant Writ Petition is instituted.
4. From the discussion and my interaction with several stakeholders, I have noticed that the major grievances are on the composition of teams in three divisions, procedure of conducting league matches, issue of promotion and demotion from one division to another division.
5. Broadly, there are three Divisions, 'A', 'B' and 'C'. As per the recommendation of single-member Committee of Hon'ble Justice L Nageshwara Rao, three-day league must be played by 22 teams, two-day league must be played by 63 teams and one-day league by 106 teams. Contrary to this, the number of teams was increased. As against the recommendations and procedure followed in the 2023-24 cricket season, 14 more teams were inducted into 'A' division from 'B' Division and created one more group. 20 teams were promoted from 'C' Division to 'B' Division in excess of 63 teams in 'B' Division. From the record placed before me it is also seen that to encourage the players and clubs take part in the league effectively and players show case their talent and the league matches are played competitively, HCA introduced system of promotion from lower Division to higher Division and

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demotion from higher Division to lower Division. As per this system two teams which performed exceptionally well in their division should be promoted to next higher Division and two teams which performed poorly in their division should be demoted to next lower Division, at the end of the season. This was made clear by the HCA in the press note dated 22-052023. However, though the matches were conducted for the league season 2023-24, at the end of the season the promotion-demotion policy was not implemented.

6. In my interaction with the Office Bearers of the HCA, the CEO and other staff, I was informed that the HCA has 36 grounds and own four grounds. The grounds were taken on lease was for a period of five days in a week, Monday to Friday. The HCA has 270 umpires and 35 scorers and a good number of curators. Selection committee is put in place which is responsible for selection of players to represent the State in various leagues conducted by Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
7. I was informed that in 'A' division each team has to play 10 matches with one match per week per team. That would require ten weeks and ten grounds. The teams in 'B' League, played two-days matches. There are 63 teams which are divided into five groups. However, Hon'ble Ombudsman imposed restrictions on two teams and therefore, only 61 teams were eligible to play. Each team has to play 11 matches with one match per week per team, but two matches can be conducted per week. It required 19 grounds. 'C' Division play only one-day matches and T20 matches. They are divided into ten groups. For 'C' Division three matches can be conducted per week per ground and 17 grounds



are required. But, the major challenge was availability of scorers. As there are only 35 scorers, maximum of 35 matches can only be conducted per day.

8. As I understand from the interaction, to effectively conduct all matches in a cricket season of a year, conducting of league matches should start in May and most of the league matches should be over by August, as from August onwards, the league season of BCCI would commence. Much before the commencement of BCCI matches, the selection of players should be completed. The players representing the State should have reasonably good time to practice together and play in BCCI tournaments.
9. For the cricket season 2024-25, the league matches were not started on time and because there was challenge to the procedure adopted by HCA and stay granted by the Hon'ble High Court, there was a break in conducting league matches and precious time was lost causing lot of hardship and suffering to the players, parents and the clubs.
10. Immediate task on my hand was to restore the composition of three divisions viz., A, B & C as recommended by Justice L Nageshwara Rao, the implementation of promotion and demotion policy as followed for 2023-24 cricket league season and to commence the conducting of matches.
11. I have instructed the CEO to show the 14 teams promoted from 'B' Division to 'A' Division in addition to 22 teams, as part of the 'B' Division; to show 20 more teams promoted from 'C' Division to 'B' Division back in 'C' Division; to revert two least performed teams in 'A' Division to 'B' Division; to prepare the list of top 20 teams in 'A'-Division after excluding two teams at the bottom



of the points. Prepare the list of ten teams in 'C'-Division by picking up one top ranked team in each of the groups. This is to conduct matches between them in the respective Divisions to select the two teams each from 'B'-Division and 'C'-Division for promotion to 'A'-Division and 'B'-Division, respectively. I have also directed the CEO to prepare the list of two least performed teams in each of the groups in 'B'-Division to conduct matches between them to identify the two least performing teams in 'B'-Division for demotion to 'C'-Division. He was directed to draw up the schedule to conduct the knockout matches on 29th & 30th of October and on 2nd & 3rd of November for promotion to 'A' Division; to draw schedule to conduct knockout matches for demotion from 'B'-Division to 'C'-Division; promotion from 'C' Division to 'B'-Division; to conduct the knockout matches simultaneously.

12. As per request received there was slight change in the schedule but matches to identify teams eligible for promotion and teams liable for demotion were conducted and the composition of teams in the three Divisions were finalized.
13. I was informed that many players from the State were playing in Ranji Trophy tournament and C.K.Naidu Tournament and they would be free only after 10-11-2024. The Syed Mushtaq Ali tournament was scheduled to start on 23-11-2024. Duly taking note of the fact of non-availability of players and within the small window available between the BCCI tournaments, the A Division T20 League cum Knock-out Tournament was conducted from 07.11.2024 to 15.11.2024, aimed at facilitating selection of players for the BCCI Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.



14. The C Division One Day League commenced on 17.11.2024 to assist in the selection process for the U14 and U16 age group categories for participation in BCCI tournaments.
15. The A Division One Day League cum Knock-out Tournament was held from 25.11.2024 to 06.12.2024, forming the basis for player selection for the BCCI Vijay Hazare One Day Trophy.
16. The Schools Tournament for U14 Boys was conducted from 16.12.2024 to 25.12.2024 to facilitate selections for the South Zone U14 Boys Tournament.
17. The D Division (Institutions) One Day League commenced on 09.02.2025 and will conclude by 04.05.2025.
18. In addition to league matches, multiple probable matches were organized for women across U15, U19, U23, and Senior categories in both T20 and One Day formats to enable selections for the respective BCCI tournaments.
19. In the process of planning and conducting the matches, I have also received several complaints/ representations on various issues concerning conducting of league matches and on many other issues which were not within the purview of orders of the Hon'ble High Court. The major grievances/ representations were on the quality of grounds, location of the grounds, umpiring, scoring, organizing league matches, selection of players, domicile status of players, age discrepancy, the composition of players representing institutional teams etc. Another major grievance was on lack of transparency in various aspects of conducting league matches and in dealing with the representations/ complaints/ grievances. To the extent possible and within the window of



mandate given to me by the Hon'ble High Court, I have considered the issues brought to my notice and resolved many of them

20. **Challenges Faced:**

i. **Inadequate Facilities at Certain Grounds:**

Some of the grounds leased for conducting league and selection matches did not meet the required standards, particularly for senior age group tournaments. Inadequacies in basic infrastructure, pitch conditions, and player amenities impacted the quality of the matches and posed challenges in providing a professional playing environment.

ii. **Concerns Regarding Umpiring Standards:**

There were multiple instances of substandard umpiring, which led to disputes and disruptions during matches. These issues not only affected the outcomes of certain games but also raised concerns regarding the credibility and integrity of the league system.

iii. **Shortage of Scorers:**

The number of scorers at HCA are around 35 and given the volume of concurrent matches to be held during the season, this number is not adequate.

iv. **Disparity in Team Strength and Skill Levels:**

The current league structure results in a mix of teams with significantly varied skill levels within the same division. This disparity dilutes the quality of competition, often leading to lopsided matches and skewed individual performances. Such a structure does not provide the right level of competitive exposure necessary for preparing players for BCCI-level tournaments.

27

v. **Institution teams:**

It was observed that barring a very few such as State Bank of India, most of the institution teams did not have enough employees to field in their teams. The rule of having at least 7 players out of the playing 11 to be employees was not met by the teams resulting in their disqualification from playing the matches. It is noted that the institutions which were originally given the memberships on the basis of recruiting cricketers for employment have done very little in active recruitments, and therefore are using players who are not employed with them to play for their teams.

vi. **Age Discrepancy:**

One major area where there is lot of discontentment among the players and their parents and litigation is on age discrepancy. The BCCI norms require certain age fulfillment to participate in tournaments at various levels. According to the officials of the HCA, there are several players who gave wrong declaration about their date of birth only to play particular league matches. When they were asked to share the details, the details were not furnished properly and on verification of the documents supplied by them and aadhaar card details, the HCA has noticed several discrepancies. On that basis, they have disqualified some players. Some of the players have approached Hon'ble High Court and obtained orders.

vii. Did not get good and timely assistance from HCA in discharging my responsibilities. The CEO seemed to be having his own constraints. Few important suggestions such as appointment of observers are not implemented.

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There were issues raised on video recordings. HCA has not offered remuneration. It would be a different thing whether I would have received or declined. Though initially, I thought of taking assistance of a retired officer of High Court who has also attended the first meeting held in the stadium but as no remuneration was offered I have not utilized the services.

21. **Way Forward:**

As an ardent cricket lover, it pained me when I found lot of deficiencies in conducting league matches, the treatment of players and various aspects concerning conducting of cricket in the State. With limited time at my disposal and the scope of assignment given to me by the Hon'ble High Court it was not possible to attend to several aspects. It also took me some time to understand the functioning of the cricket related aspects. With my experience in conducting league matches and interactions I had with various stakeholders I suggest the following aspects for consideration of HCA to ensure the leagues are properly conducted, the players are given fair opportunity to show case their talent and the focus shifts to promotion of cricket as such. They are not exhaustive and there may be many other aspects, and it is for the HCA to consider. Though there is short time ahead to commence the league season as suggested hereunder, in the interest of cricket in the State of Telangana, HCA should consider implementing the suggestions set out hereunder immediately:

- (i) As some of the league matches for the A and B Divisions could not be conducted during the current season, a team of former Ranjee players

22

(comprising 3) be constituted to examine how to go about further. The committee to consider, (a) Whether to conduct all remaining matches in three-day format; or (b) Whether to change the format to complete the cycle immediately; or (c) whether to carry over the composition of the 'A' Division for the cricket season 2025-2026; (d) Whether the teams be given an option to freshly register players in their teams as there could be an issue with players availability from the previous season. The proposals of the committee should be acted upon. If it is decided to continue conducting of all matches, the matches can be conducted in May. Matches should start early by 7 or 8 AM. Give break in the afternoon and continue till 6PM.

- (ii) While the number of teams in each Division currently aligns with the guidelines issued during the tenure of the Single Member Committee (SMC) in the 2023–24 season, I am told that it has become increasingly challenging to complete the entire league schedule due to the volume of matches. In comparison to other States Associations, the number of matches conducted under the current HCA league structure is significantly higher and not well-suited to the logistical constraints. It also lowers the quality of the competition by having a mix of varied level of skills, thereby resulting in performances that may be skewed and also does not prepare the players better for the BCCI tournaments. The league typically begins in June, coinciding with the onset of the monsoon season, resulting in frequent cancellations of scheduled matches. The limited calendar



window further hampers the completion of fixtures, impacting player assessment and team progression.

To address these challenges, the HCA may have to undertake thorough exercise to reformat the league structure. Sooner it is done it would be better for the development of Cricket in Telangana. For the present, it is recommended that as against the current format of 3-day matches during the league phase, these be converted into 2-day matches, with only the Championship/Final Round matches be conducted as 4-day fixtures. This change would help optimize the available time while maintaining competitiveness and match quality. The 'A' Division teams be organized into three groups of 7, 7 and 8. Each team shall play 6/ 7 matches at the group stage. Based on the performance, 2 top performing teams from each group be picked up and these 6 teams play 5 matches each in 4 day fixtures.

- (iii) Prior to the start of the HCA league season, the HCA should organise intra-district and inter-district tournaments so that the District Associations are able to field the right teams in the HCA leagues. This will also help improve the grassroots cricket in the State. To achieve this objective, HCA should provide funds to the District Associations to lease grounds, practice facilities, availability of trained match officials, etc.
- (iv) The annual league calendar should be published well before the start of the season, may be in January or February with the playing conditions and eligibility requirements notified in advance. This should be in sync

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with the BCCI calendar to ensure timely selection of players. This will ensure that all the stakeholders are well prepared for the season and there are no surprises.

- (v) I am of the opinion that a team of former players be constituted, and the team should review all the issues concerning age discrepancy. It should call the age particulars from all the players who have registered with HCA and intend to register, verify the details furnished by them, provide an opportunity of hearing and publish list of players whose date of birth discrepancies are noticed giving the details of discrepancies. Such of those players who are included in that list be provided an opportunity to give explanation and on due consideration of the explanation, the Committee should take a final decision. All this exercise should be completed well before the enrolment of players for the clubs. For any reason if this exercise is likely to consume lot of time, the players whose age discrepancy is noticed but no adverse decision is already taken, be permitted to play the league matches on ad-hoc basis and their further continuation would be subject to the report of the committee.
- (vi) As of now, the HCA league matches are played by players enrolled by the Clubs which are located in erstwhile Hyderabad and Rangareddy District. Only later, one combined District's Team is inducted into the A-Division and there are District teams in B-Division. I have received several representations stating that there is no support from HCA in promoting cricket in the Districts. There are no basic facilities including grounds,

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leave alone turf grounds in the Districts. The HCA owns only two grounds in Nizamabad and Nalgonda towns, but even those grounds are not developed. The District Associations are not given financial support for development of sports. They were complaining that in all the neighboring States, lot of importance is given for development of cricket in the rural areas.

In addition to what is suggested in para (iii) above I would suggest that separate league matches should be held for all the Districts other than erstwhile Hyderabad and Rangareddy District and two best performing teams should be inducted into A-League. Two slots in A-league should be reserved for District Teams other than erstwhile Hyderabad and Rangareddy District. HCA should also take up conducting summer camps in rural areas to train players.

- (vii) Another grievance I received is how players are treated. The grounds are located at far off places. There are no basic infrastructure facilities in the grounds. The players do not receive minimum courtesies and are ill-treated.

In all the grounds, there must be facilities for proper shelter for the players, supporting staff and Officials of HCA and visitors; proper wash-rooms; drinking water; snacks and tea should be provided on the match day. The location of grounds should be easily accessible for the players to reach the grounds. There must be a designated person preferably a retired cricketer who has represented India or played for the State in BCCI

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tournaments such as Ranji Trophy who is entrusted to supervise the facilities provided to players.

- (viii) Coaching assignments should be given to current and ex-players. This will develop bondage and easy access for the players also to learn the techniques and to fine-tune their capacity to play well.
- (ix) I also suggest that if 3 days matches are continued, each team should be allotted 80 overs in the first innings and 40 overs in the second innings. One team will play on the first day, the second team will play on the second day and on the third day, both teams will play second innings.
- (x) The cricket season should start in May. To start with T-20 leagues. They can be conducted between 7 am to 11 am and wherever flood lights are available, in the evening. HCA can explore conducting revised format matches to 'A' Division (2 day / 3 day / 4 day).
- (xi) Players to represent the HCA should be selected at least 30 days before the start of the season.
- (xii) The CEO must have freedom to discharge the day-to-day administrative function as per laid down procedures and clear guidelines. There should be dynamic and pro-active CEO supported by qualified staff with assured tenure. The CEO should be assisted at least by 2 Deputies. The administrative office of HCA should function like a corporate office.
- (xiii) The basic objective of registering institutional teams to participate in league matches is to ensure that the players get employment. However, over a period of time, most of these institutions are not employing the cricketers and inducting players into their team from outside and who are

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not employed. Sometimes they are also employed on a consolidated pay basis temporarily for the purpose of playing league matches. The institutional teams must be told that they must have 7 players representing them who are permanently employed. This employment should be confined to cricketers of Telangana. The institutions should report to the HCA the number of players employed by them, furnish their details, like name, date of employment, nature of employment and nature of post held by them, well before the commencement of the league matches. Only such institutional teams be permitted to play league matches who have employed at least 7 players representing them.

- (xiv) HCA should take on lease 30 grounds for the entire 6 months. Out of this, 10 should be A category grounds and 20 should be B category grounds. HCA should maintain these grounds. HCA should enter into agreements with owners of the grounds at least one month before the start of the season. The HCA should also encourage owners of the Clubs to maintain home grounds to conduct T-20, one day, 2 days/ 3 days / 4 days matches. HCA should formulate detailed guidelines about the standards of the grounds, which include maintaining the playing area, basic amenities to the players, to the spectators, to the representatives of the clubs whose matches are played, to the groundsmen, and to the officials of the HCA such as washroom, shade, chairs, tables, fans, tea and snacks. With reference to grounds owned by a club, 50% of the matches played by the club should be conducted in the home ground and 50% away. HCA should



ensure there should be enough number of curators and workers to take care of the grounds. There should be one curator for 5 grounds. HCA should explore providing floodlights in some grounds so that day night matches can be played. It will help in organising all league matches.

- (xv) All 2 days and 3 days (4 days if introduced) matches, and all other important matches, more particularly matches where the performance of the players matters in the selections to represent the State, should have video recording facility. The cameras should cover playing area and where scorers sit. There should be a review of the field umpire decision by the third umpire. The umpires should be made accountable. There should be an appeal committee comprising of experts to look into the grievances of umpiring decisions. Umpires should be trained and a large pool of trained umpires should be maintained. Umpires should be remunerated properly. Based on their performances, Umpires should be incentivised. The allotment of umpire should be announced on the day of the match preferably by draw of lots. There is an urgent need to strengthen umpire training, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms to maintain fairness and consistency in officiating. More number of scorers need to be trained and added. The scorers should be remunerated properly. Based on their performance they should be incentivised. A more balanced and tiered system is essential to ensure both fair competition and meaningful player development.

- (xvi) There should be team of referees to supervise the matches played in various grounds. The team should comprise of former Ranji players of repute and integrity. The team members should visit the grounds, inspect the quality of grounds, the manner in which the matches are conducted and submit its report. The HCA should review the reports and wherever deficiencies are pointed out, it should take immediate remedial measures. If the report indicates poor quality of maintenance of the ground, action should be taken against owner of the ground or employees responsible and wherever it is incumbent, to blacklist that ground.
- (xvii) In every cricket season, the exercise of promotion and demotion has to be taken up before finalizing the composition of teams, in a particular division. Where a team in A division stood reverted to B division because of its poor performance in league matches in previous season, it should be classified as elite group in B division.
- (xviii) The major grievances of all the stakeholders, is with reference to lack of transparency in the functioning of HCA, eligibility criteria, playing criteria, location of matches and inaccessibility of officials of HCA. All aspects concerning conducting of affairs of HCA should be placed on the website. There should be an online redressal mechanism for any grievance. If a grievance is not resolved by this means, a personal hearing be held before a committee of officials and the issues be resolved expeditiously.



- (xix) Another major grievance is on domicile issue. I suggest that HCA constitutes committee of ex-players to review and finalize all the domicile issues pending with the HCA. By fixing a timeframe it can also call for fresh representations and take decisions. Wherever, it is noticed that the player cannot be considered as a local candidate, the committee should assign reasons and the player must be informed. The player must be given opportunity to put forth his version. The committee should examine the representation of the player and submit its recommendation to the HCA. The HCA should lay down clear guidelines of eligibility of any person to play in Telangana and to represent HCA, immediately. The grievances have to be resolved at least one month before commencement of league season. If for any reason the issue is not resolved immediately but the player is already registered, he may be allowed to play on ad-hoc basis subject to the assessment of eligibility by the Committee.
- (xx) A club can be permitted to engage upto 2 outside players to play in the league matches but they are not entitled to represent the HCA in the BCCI tournaments unless they fulfill the domicile criteria.
- (xxi) MOHINUDDOULA TOURNAMENT is an iconic tournament of the HCA. It has a special place in various tournaments conducted in the country. It also gives opportunity to the players of the State to play with teams of other States and get good exposure and match practice in a competitive atmosphere. I am told this tournament is not conducted for

the last few years. I suggest reviving this tournament in the coming cricket league season.

A copy of this Report is being forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer of Hyderabad Cricket Association to enable him to take immediate measures and to commence the 2025-26 leagues immediately.

Dated: 13.04.2025


(Justice P. Naveen Rao)