

## UNESCO Chair for Legal Dimensions of Clean Sport

*Chairholder: Prof. (Dr.) Ruhi Paul*

*Institution: National Law University, Delhi*

*Country: India*

*Date of Establishment: 26.05.2025*

### Significant Achievements so far

The UNESCO Chair for Legal Dimensions of Clean Sport at National Law University, Delhi was established to advance education, research, policy dialogue, and institutional capacity-building at the intersection of sport, law, ethics, and clean sport governance. In line with UNESCO's strategic priorities for quality education, youth engagement, and knowledge sharing, the Chair has become an active interdisciplinary platform that promotes integrity, fairness, and institutional accountability in sport.

Over the past one year, the Chair has made meaningful contributions to policy dialogue and governance reform in sport. This includes convening a multi-stakeholder **Roundtable on Khelo Bharat Niti 2025**, followed by a consolidated recommendation submission to the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS). The Chair has also submitted detailed comments on the **Draft National Sports Governance (National Sports Tribunal) Rules, 2025**, and also contributed to public consultations on emerging regulatory issues such as Online Gaming. (**Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming (PROG) Act, 2025**). Education and capacity-building remain central to the Chair's mandate. A **Certificate Course on Sports Law and Safe Sport Practices** was successfully delivered for students, practitioners, and professionals. Building on this, the Chair launched a first-of-its-kind one-year online Diploma Programme in collaboration with the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), titled **Legal Dimensions of Clean Sports: Understanding Anti-Doping Regulations**, designed to build legal literacy and institutional understanding in clean sport governance.

The Chair has also invested significantly in awareness-building and public legal education. This includes the development of a **Handbook on Legal Dimensions of Clean Sports**, aimed at making

anti-doping rules, athlete rights, and legal processes more accessible to athletes and support personnel.

In thought leadership and knowledge creation, the Chair has maintained an active public engagement presence through op-eds and commentary on contemporary sports law and governance issues, with contributions published in *Bar & Bench*. Three op-eds from the Chair are already in print — on the *Khelo Bharat Niti*, on *India's sporting future hinges on integrity* and on the *National Sports Tribunal*; a fourth op-ed examining the *criminalisation of doping* is currently being finalised. The Chair is also currently developing a pioneering case compendium on Indian sports jurisprudence, intended to systematically compile and analyse significant Indian sports-related legal decisions. Given the absence of a consolidated resource in this area, this initiative seeks to contribute meaningfully to legal scholarship, education, and institutional understanding of sports law in India.

The Chair has further strengthened academic engagement through the *1st International Conference on Clean and Safe Sports*, bringing together national and international experts for dialogue on anti-doping, safeguarding, athlete rights, and governance, and is currently working on an *Edited Volume* on contemporary issues in clean sport governance.

The Chair has also made significant strides in original research and peer-reviewed scholarship. A team member of the Chair, **Ms. Udiksha Rana**, has been awarded a prestigious **WADA Social Science Research Grant (Tier III)** amounting to **USD 18,200**, reflecting the Chair's growing international recognition in the domain of clean sport research. In addition, the Chair has a research paper forthcoming in the *Journal of the Indian Law Institute (JILI)*, one of India's most reputed peer-reviewed legal journals. The paper, titled "*No Country for Athletes – An Analysis of the Structural Reasons behind Sporting Failures and a Roadmap for Reform*" (forthcoming), offers a critical examination of the systemic barriers to athletic success in India and proposes concrete pathways for institutional reform, further cementing the Chair's contribution to sports law and policy scholarship.

### **Plans for 2026–2027**

The UNESCO Chair on Legal Dimensions of Clean Sport aims to further strengthen its role as a regional hub for education, policy engagement, and knowledge creation on ethical sport governance in South Asia.

A major priority for the coming period will be the expansion of specialized academic and professional capacity-building initiatives. Alongside the continued delivery of the ongoing Diploma Programme in collaboration with the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), the Chair plans to launch a new specialized **Certificate Course on Anti-Doping Laws & Emerging Areas**. This will complement the Chair's broader effort to create structured interdisciplinary learning

opportunities for students, young professionals, legal practitioners, sports administrators, and researchers.

A key scholarly priority will be the completion and publication of the ongoing ***Indian Sports Jurisprudence Case Compendium***, envisioned as a foundational educational and reference resource for academia, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers, helping address the current absence of a consolidated body of Indian sports law jurisprudence.

In alignment with UNESCO's emphasis on meaningful youth engagement, digital transformation, and accessible knowledge dissemination, the Chair plans to expand digital outreach through podcasts, athlete legal literacy initiatives, public discussion series, awareness toolkits, and educational resources designed to simplify complex legal frameworks for wider audiences.

The Chair will further seek stronger collaborations with universities, sports institutions, anti-doping organizations, regulators, and fellow UNESCO Chairs to foster interdisciplinary research, regional dialogue, and collaborative programming. A longer-term objective is to establish a sustained South Asian platform for conversations on ethics, governance, justice, and institutional integrity in sport.