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School children move Delhi HC seeking rescheduling of outdoor sports to months with safer air quality

The petition states that the children, who actively participate in zonal, inter-zonal, state and national sporting activities, are being forced to engage in strenuous physical exertion in “a highly toxic environment”

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THE HINDU BUREAU



Water being sprinkled to control the air pollution at the Kartavyapath on a smoggy day in New Delhi on ember 17, 2025 | Photo Credit: R.V. Moorthy

A group of school children has approached the Delhi High Court seeking directions to the Delhi government to revise its annual outdoor sports calendar and shift tournaments, trials, and coaching camps to months with “verifiably better ambient air quality”.

The petitioners, who actively participate in state scheduled sports tournaments, camps, trials, argues that continuing to schedule these sporting events between November and January each year, when Delhi's pollution levels routinely fall into the severe and hazardous categories, puts the schools students at serious health risk.

The petition stated that the children, who actively participate in zonal, inter-zonal, state and national sporting activities, are being forced to engage in strenuous physical exertion in "a highly toxic environment".



"In fact, even as on date of filing of the instant petition, the AQI in Delhi is consistently in the 'Severe' category; the statutory GRAP-III emergency plan has been put in force," the petition, filed through advocates Manjira Dasgupta, Bhargav Ravindran Thali and Mayank Khaitan, stated.

“In fact, even as on date of filing of the instant petition, the AQI in Delhi is consistently in the ‘Severe’ category; the statutory GRAP-III emergency plan has been put in force,” the petition, filed through advocates Manjira Dasgupta, Bhargav Ravindran Thali and Mayank Khaitan, stated.

“At present, children across Delhi are being compelled to choose between participating in such state-scheduled sports events (at the cost of permanent irreparable damage to their physical health), or remain indoors to mitigate and prevent such harm,” the plea said.

The lead petitioner, Ms. Nysa Bedi, a football and cricket player, recently took part in the Delhi government’s U-19 Girls Football tournament from November 10–14, 2025, and is scheduled to attend the Football Nationals Selection and Training Camp beginning the week of November 17.

Apart from Ms. Bedi, 10 other school students are party to the petition.