Haryana’s Notification on State-Employed Sportspersons

Why in news?

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Haryana government’s notification allows State-employed sportsperson to pursue professional sports and commercial endorsements.

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What are the concerns with service rule’s for sportspersons?

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- To create equality of opportunity public employment is promised to performing talent, enabling sportspersons to focus on sports and not the money.
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- Under the service rules, all employees of the state are barred from undertaking any other occupation or business.
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- Therefore, if an employee wishes to pursue another commercial engagement, then they must forgo the public employment.
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- Conversely, the state has the claim overall proceeds that its employees make during public employment, This provision poses constraints for sportspersons.
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- Ideally, if the service rules are applied, a sportsperson cannot pursue sports during the subsistence of the employment, as it would come at a cost to the office they hold. The state, therefore, makes an exception for them.
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- It is because the pursuit of sports brings laurels to society and a feeling of national pride that the state treats sportspersons as being on duty while training and taking part in competitions.
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- But, such a relaxation cannot extend to a sportsperson focusing solely on commercial gains.

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What is the notification of Haryana about?

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- Haryana government has recently decided to allow players to pursue professional competitions, something which was previously disallowed.
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- Because the pursuit of professional competition came at the time and cost to the public office, it was felt that the state should not allow it unfettered.
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- Therefore, the state as the employer decided to retain a fraction of the profits that the players made while pursuing commercial enterprises as long as they did it as public employees.
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- The sportsperson would be given extraordinary leave (without pay) during the said period and only one-third of the income earned needed to be deposited with the state.
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- This wasn’t a “tax” or “penalty” for performing players, but a fair deduction for pursuing commercial gains at the time of the employer.
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What is the significance of this move?

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- Since sportspersons have a short career expectancy, the move was felt that opening up the professional arena would encourage more people to take up sports as a career.
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- Such money would solely be used by the State Sports Council for the development of sports.
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- By this the sportsperson can enjoy the security of public employment, and also pursue any commercial enterprise related to sports.
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- The society in turn gets to share their success through a feeling of national pride and contributions from that income.
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- The money that the professional players contribute will only go on to help the successive generations of Olympians.
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Source: The Indian Express

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