Law Commission on Legalising Gambling

Why in news?

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Law Commission of India has recommended the government to allow gambling in sports.

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What are the recommendations?

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- The Law Commission has observed that it is impossible to stop illegal gambling.
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- Hence, the only viable option left is to allow gambling in sports and to "regulate" it.
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- It recommended "cashless" gambling in sports.
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- **Linkage** - The revenue from gambling should be taxable, which can be used for public welfare measures.
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- Transactions between gamblers and operators should be linked to their Aadhaar and PAN cards.
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- This will provide for the government to follow and regulate them.
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- **Classification** - Gambling would be classified as 'proper gambling' and 'small gambling'.
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- Proper gambling would be for the rich who play for high stakes.
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- On the other hand, small gambling would be for the low-income groups.
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- **Restrictions** - The number of gambling transactions by each individual should be capped on a monthly, half-yearly and annual basis.
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- Restrictions on amount should also be prescribed while using electronic money facilities.
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- **Protection** - Regulations should be made to protect vulnerable groups like BPL families and minors.
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- It should include those receiving social welfare entitlements, government subsidies and Jan Dhan account holders.
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- **Legal** - Foreign Exchange Management and FDI laws and policies should be amended.
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- This is to encourage investment in the casino/online gaming industry.
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- This would boost tourism as well as employment.
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What are the concerns?

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- The SC in 2016 had asked the commission to look into legalising betting in cricket.
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- It came as part of the judgment in the BCCI case involving illegal betting in IPL cricket matches.
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- Clearly, Supreme Court's reference did not specify sports as a whole.
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- Given this, the commission is said to have exceeded the brief given to it.
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- There are also opinions that a country as poor as India should not allow ‘legalised gambling’.
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- It could leave the poor poorer and promote vested interests.
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Source: The Hindu

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