

## **Match-fixing**

### **What is the issue?**

- Match-fixing is not an independent offence in India.
- There is a need for a separate law that would punish the match-fixers.

### **What is the CBI's definition of match-fixing?**

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has defined the following as the instances, which are to be treated as match-fixing.
- Instances where an individual player or group of players received money to underperform;
- Instances where a player placed bets in matches in which he played that would naturally undermine his performance;
- Instances where players passed on information to a betting syndicate;
- Instances where grounds men were given money to prepare a pitch in a way that suited the betting syndicates; and
- Instances of current and ex-players being used by bookies to gain access to players to influence their performances for a monetary consideration.

### **Is there a law against match-fixing in India?**

- Match-fixing is not an independent offence in India and there are no laws covering it.
- Investigating authorities mostly try to book the accused for cheating under Section 420 of the IPC.
- Other laws like the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 have been used.
- After every match-fixing scandal, investigators, legislators and lawyers have called for reforms.
- They argue that the absence of laws makes it difficult for them to incriminate someone for match-fixing.

### **How have alleged match-fixers been punished in the past?**

- Punishments were handed out by the cricket board under its anti-corruption rules.
- These punishments, too, were later reduced or overturned by courts.
- In fact, lawyers use these cases to illustrate the need to have separate, foolproof laws for match-fixing.

## What powers do the investigators have?

- They have all the powers to collect evidence if it is available.
- However, there has to be an offence to investigate.
- Since match-fixing is not defined as an offence, it is difficult to bring it under the domain of Section 420 of the IPC.

## Have there been attempts to make laws against match-fixing?

- In 2013, the Ministry of Sports drafted the Prevention of Sporting Fraud Bill that suggested a jail term for offenders.
- Two Private Member's Bills too were introduced in the Lok Sabha,
  - a. In 2016, Anurag Thakur introduced National Sports Ethics Commission Bill and
  - b. In 2018, Shashi Tharoor introduced the Sports (Online Gaming and Prevention of Fraud) Bill.
- Neither has been debated yet.

**Source: The Indian Express**

