

IPL cheerleaders face ban in Maharashtra

Taking objection to 'scantily clad foreign girls' dances', the Maharashtra government Thursday asked the Indian Premier League (IPL) to seek prior permission for cheerleaders' performances during high-profile Twenty20 cricket matches.

Maharashtra Minister of State for Home Siddharam Mhetre told reporters Thursday that the organizers of the cricket events will have to seek the state government's permission for cheerleaders' dance shows during the matches - something they had not done before last week's IPL match here.

'The scantily clad foreign girls' dances are certainly obscene and do not gel with the Indian sensibilities, culture and ethos,' the minister said.

The minister's observations came in response to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and senior legislative council member Nitin Gadkari's demand in the upper house last week to impose a ban on the dances.

'The government had done the right thing in banning the dance bars in the state. It must do the same thing in the case of cheerleaders' dances which are worse in the sense they are held in the open unlike the bar dances that used to be in closed areas,' Gadkari said.

Concurring with the opposition leader, Mhetre hinted of legal action against the IPL organizers for 'holding the show' in [Mumbai](#) without seeking the state's permission.

The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) members, whose leader Sharad Pawar is the president of the Indian cricket board that is associated with the IPL, jeered at Gadkari's 'puritanical' demand.

'Should we now start objecting to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) volunteers' khaki shorts because they are too short to meet our sensibilities?' retorted upper house member Jitendra Avhad of the NCP when reporters asked him to comment on Gadkari's views.

While Mhetre belongs to the Congress, his senior minister, Deputy Chief Minister R.R. Patil who holds the home portfolio belongs to the NCP.

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