



Press release

Bihar athletes welcome professional approach by Ad Hoc panel & State Govt.

Dehradun, Feb 2: Paris 2024 Olympian Trap shooter Shreyasi Singh, a member of the Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the Indian Olympic Association to oversee the Bihar Olympic Association matters, and her fellow athletes today highlighted the pride and confidence with which the Bihar contingent is competing the 2025 National Games Uttarakhand.

“It is in placing the athletes at the centre that we are bringing in a more professional culture. The results are already showing,” said Shreyasi Singh, who led Bihar in the Athletes’ Parade and will compete in the Trap Shooting event. “Our athletes have already won medals in Rugby and Wushu, but even those who have not got podium finishes feel cared for.”

Bihar State Sports Authority Director General S Raveendran said working with the Ad Hoc Committee was a vastly different experience when compared to the earlier regime. “I can see that they are aligned with the State’s vision of raising the standard of our sport,” he said. “By looking after the welfare and addressing the needs of the athletes, it has been commendable.”

He said he was happy that Ad Hoc Committee ensured that selection of athletes was done in a fair manner. “For a change, we have had no complaints about the process or about the lack of transparency,” Mr. Raveendran said. “I am glad that the Committee planned training camps for the selected athletes and even engaged coaches from outside Bihar to assist their preparations.”

Mr. Raveendran recalled times when Bihar athletes would turn up for Athletes’ Parades in the Opening Ceremony in bare feet or in slippers and as a ragtag outfit. “That would draw adverse comments in the national media. I am glad that the Ad Hoc Committee and the Bihar Government have projected a strong image of Brand Bihar at the National Games,” he said.

The IOA-appointed Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the Bihar Olympic Association matters includes representatives from Hockey, Weightlifting, Rugby and Athletics besides Shreyasi Singh. The panel’s first task was to ensure that there would be no compromise either in the preparation of the Bihar contingent or with its dignity and honour.



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Two of its members, former India decathlete Sanjay Kumar Sinha, IAS (retd.) and erstwhile sprinter and Rugby player Pankaj Kumar Jyoti have been venue hopping and making the athletes feel cared for. “Bihar is evolving, and it is high time our sports reflects those aspirations with a professional outlook,” Pankaj Kumar Jyoti said.

Arti Kumari, who led the Bihar women’s Rugby team to the silver medal, recalled how unhappy the team was with the facilities provided by Bihar Olympic Association for the 2022 National Games. “From getting us an overseas coach to help us prepare to the travel arrangements, from the playing kit to letting us stay back for two days after the final, we have been made to feel comfortable and that helped us deliver our optimum performances,” she said.

She points out that the quality of the kit that the Bihar athletes got for the National Games is a sea change from the past. “We used to get one track suit of poor quality but now we have a full kit bag, complete with playing uniform and a cool track suit and a winter jacket that was so essential here, especially after our late evening matches,” she said.

Jianshu exponent Isha Mishra echoed those sentiments. She said it was a different experience honing her talent under the watchful eyes of a coach in training camp organised by the Ad Hoc Committee. “More than competing in an imported kit and with overseas equipment in the National Games Wushu competition.

“When I won the bronze medal in the last National Games in Goa, there was nobody from the Olympic Association to even see me on the podium. Though I finished fifth here, I was happy that members of the Ad Hoc Committee were constantly in touch with me and the Wushu team, enquiring about our welfare. For the first time, the athletes have felt cared for,” she said.

“It may seem a small thing to some but the fact that we were wearing international kits and had imported equipment instilled a greater sense of confidence. In fact, there were some athletes from other States who wanted me to gift them my playing kit. I can also tell you that I felt very proud wearing the Bihar colours,” she said.

Shreyasi Singh draws attention to the practical side as well. “Of course, the Ad Hoc Committee has started well and ensured that our contingent would portray the changing image of the Bihar in the National Games. But there is much work to be done to ensure that an elected executive committee runs the Bihar Olympic Association, and our sports is administered well,” she said.

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