

THE REPORT OF THE NRAI REVIEW COMMITTEE

Introduction

Indian Shooting returned empty handed from the 31st Olympic Games in Rio. It ended a run of three consecutive Olympic Games where India's shooters had done the country proud and established the sport of Shooting as India's number one medal winning sport.

In 2004 Major Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore broke through with a historic Silver in Men's Double Trap at the Athens Olympics. That performance heralded a new dawn for Indian Shooting and two years later Abhinav Bindra in the Men's 10m Air Rifle and Manavjit Singh Sandhu in Men's Trap stood on top of the podium at the World Championships in Zagreb. Bindra repeated that feat two years later, winning India's first ever Gold medal in an individual event at the Beijing Olympics. It turned out to be the defining moment not just for Indian Shooting but also for Indian sport as it broke a mental barrier and inspired a new generation of sportspersons. At the London Olympics in 2012 India doubled its tally with Subedar Vijay Kumar winning Silver in the Men's Rapid Fire Pistol Event and Gagan Narang's Bronze in the Men's 10m Air Rifle.

Everyone took it for granted that there would be progress automatically, and forgot to ensure a systematic healthy process.

Twelve Indian shooters clinched qualifying berths or a quota place for the Rio Olympic Games. This was the highest number of quota places won by India for an Olympic Games. The Shooters who won Quota places were:

1. Jitu Rai (Pistol) at the 2014 World Championship
2. Apurvi Chandela (Rifle) at the 2015 Changwon World Cup
3. Gagan Narang (Rifle) at the 2015 Fort Benning World Cup
4. Abhinav Bindra (Rifle) at the 2015 Munich World Cup
5. Gurpreet Singh (Pistol) at the 2015 Munich World Cup
6. Prakash Nanjappa (Pistol) at the 2015 Gabala World Cup
7. Chain Singh (Rifle) at the 2015 Gabala World Cup
8. Mairaj Ahmed Khan (Shotgun) at the 2015 Lonato World Championship
9. Heena Sidhu (Pistol) at the 2016 Delhi Asian Olympic Qualifying Tournament
10. Ayonika Paul (Rifle) at the 2016 Delhi Asian Olympic Qualifying Tournament
11. Kynan Chenai (Shotgun) at the 2016 Delhi Asian Olympic Qualifying Tournament
12. Sanjeev Rajput (Rifle) at the 2016 Delhi Asian Olympic Qualifying Tournament

Going into the NRAI trials, Manavjit Sandhu who had bonus points, marginally pipped quota place winner Kynan Chenai and bagged the quota in Men's Trap. In the Men's Rifle 3 Positions event Chain Singh and Gagan Narang finished ahead of Sanjeev Rajput forcing the

NRAI to exchange the Men's Rifle 3 Position quota for one in Men's Trap. Kynan Chenai thus regained the quota at the expense of Sanjeev Rajput. Considering that a few shooters were competing in multiple events, there were 18 starts for India at Rio.

The expectations were high from the Indian shooting team heading into Rio.

Only two Indian shooters could qualify for the final of their respective events at the Olympic Shooting Range in Deodoro. 2008 Olympic Champion Abhinav Bindra finished in fourth place in the Men's 10m Air Rifle event after losing a shoot-off. Jitu Rai finished eighth in the Men's 10m Air Pistol on the first day of competition at Rio. Skeet Shooter Mairaj Ahmed Khan was involved in a five way shoot-off for two places in the final of Men's Skeet and was the first to bow out, ultimately finishing 9th in the classifications. Gurpreet Singh finished seventh in the Men's Rapid Fire Pistol event with six shooters progressing to the final.

With Indian Shooting failing to lead from the front, the overall collection for the Indian Olympic contingent fell to two medals. After a largely barren run, it was thanks to the resurgence of woman power, with PV Sindhu winning the Silver in Badminton and Sakshi Malik the Bronze in Wrestling, that kept the tricolour flying high.

Twenty years ago, it would have been treated as a bonanza, as was the case when Leander Paes won the improbable singles Bronze medal in Tennis, as a rank outsider, in the Atlanta Games in 1996. But, not anymore. Indian sport has moved forward and has realised that it has the potential to strike it rich on the biggest stage in sports.

Every setback is an education and has the potential to catapult the victim to greater heights. If only the lessons are grasped and there is a will to get up and move ahead.

Post the no-show at the Rio Olympic Games, NRAI President Shri Raninder Singh instituted a four-member review committee to identify in a "cold and ruthless" manner the reasons for Shooting not winning a single medal at the Games. The members of the committee were as follows.

1. Shri Abhinav Bindra, Padma Bhushan, Chairman
2. Sushri Manisha Malhotra, Asian Games Medalist and Sports Administrator (Convenor)
3. Shri Kamesh Srinivasan, Senior Journalist
4. Shri Digvijay Singh Deo, Senior Journalist

Shri Rajiv Bhatia, Secretary, NRAI was also a member of this committee but his role was limited to Secretarial matters. Shri Bhatia further deputed Shri Nimit Chopra (designation) to assist the committee.

Since Shri Bindra had competed at the Olympics before announcing his retirement, the 'order' to avoid any potential conflict of interest clash read that in ***“matters specifically pertaining to the interview or findings/conclusions if any against or in favour of any Olympic team athlete that maybe examined by the committee, the Chairman of the committee shall be exempt participation in toto from such tasks by recusal, however upon his own request he too shall make himself available for interview by the remainder of the panel.”*** The order further stated that, “for this specific issue only, the remaining members of the commission shall officiate jointly, where majority view shall prevail.”

In order to guide the committee the President NRAI also included certain terms of reference which are dealt with point by point, further in the report.

The Committee had its first meeting at the NRAI office in New Delhi on the 29th of August 2016. Over the course of its sittings the following Shooters and Coaches were spoken to either in person or through video conferencing or on the phone. The meetings were held at the office of the NRAI, the residence of the Chairman and also the residence of the Convener Ms. Malhotra for reasons of connectivity.

1. Suma Shirur
2. Ronak Pandit
3. Mansher Singh
4. Manavjit Singh Sandhu
5. Mairaj Ahmed Khan
6. Ayonika Paul (Skype)
7. Apurvi Chandela (Skype)
8. Heena Sidhu (Phone)
9. Gagan Narang (Skype)
10. Stanislas Lapidus (Skype)
11. Deepali Deshpande
12. Jitu Rai (Phone)
13. Gurpreet Singh (Phone)
14. Col Lalit Sharma (Phone)
15. Vikram Chopra
16. Yuri Lisichko
17. Prakash Nanjappa (Phone)
18. Kynan Chenai (Skype)
19. Ennio Falco (Phone)
20. Marcello Dradi (Phone)
21. Pavel Smirnov (Phone)
22. Chain Singh (Phone)
23. Jaspal Rana (Phone)

The committee also requested views of shooters on various points by the form of a questionnaire that was posted on the official website of the NRAI. It is learnt that the NRAI also e-mailed shooters a copy of the questionnaire. There was an overwhelming response not just from past Olympians but also Shooters at the National level including Anjali Bhagwat, Joydeep Karmakar, Rakesh Manpat and Man Singh.

The Chairman of the Committee was categorical in his views that the report was not meant to be an attempt to blame a singular person for the no show at Rio. The guiding principles of this committee was to seek answers from the participants and suggest ways to eradicate systemic flaws that ultimately played its part in the results. That being said, the sport of Shooting is by its very nature a very fickle sport and the new format which sees all scores reduced to zero for the final made it impossible to pass judgment on the performance. However the committee decided to look closely at the preparations of each shooter along with the back up provided by the support staff.

To sum up the deliberations of the committee it can be said with no reservations that Indian Shooting 'over achieved' at the Rio Olympic Games. The formula for success was wrong and Indian Shooting had ridden its luck over the last few years, no doubt helped by some extremely talented shooters. It is the sincere wish of this committee that the NRAI closely look at its processes and the free hand given to individuals to avoid another embarrassing no show in four years time at Tokyo.

It is time for Indian Shooting to change track and learn from the disappointments of Rio. For the first time in years funds were no constraint and the NRAI needs to be patted on its back for ensuring that no Indian shooter ever complained about the paucity of funds in the lead up to the Olympics. However, was that right?

The committee was unanimous in its view that Indian shooting needs to change, change its attitude, its policies and practices, so that the booming talent gets a fair chance to flourish in a healthy atmosphere, and win all the medals that it can in the World Championships and the Olympics. The 'chalta hai' attitude that shadows Indian sport has to be stopped. The NRAI has to shed excess flab and needs to become a lean and mean fighting machine to ensure the implementation of a system that will churn out Champions. At present the system is adhoc. There is no systemic framework in place.

It is perhaps pertinent to point out here that even though the committee based its report keeping the Terms of reference as a standard guide, there have been instances when it has gone and touched on other aspects. The committee was of the view that it could not ignore

multiple instances of shooters suggesting changes in topics that were outside the terms of reference. Clause 13 of the Terms of reference empowers the Chairman to include any topic into this report if deemed necessary and it is that clause that has been used to address matters outside the Terms of reference.

Finally, even though the following pages may be critical at some point of the NRAI and its office bearers, it is important to acknowledge its willingness to look within for answers. The NRAI is the only Sports Federation in this country to search for answers for the disappointing performance at Rio and the conviction to appoint independent members is commendable.

The Performance of the Indian Shooting team at the Rio Olympics

The Chairman of the Committee recused himself from the deliberations and recommendations regarding this section.

Heena Sidhu:

Was competing in her second Olympics. The only Indian woman pistol shooter to do so. Shot 380 out of 400, following a series of 94, 95, 96, 95 and missed the final by four points. Had shot scores of 384 to 389 in the World Cups and World Cup Finals many times earlier.

Was competing in the 25-metre sports pistol for the first time in the Olympics. She shot 576, and placed 20th. It was only her fourth international competition in the event, including once in the Asian Games in Incheon. In comparison, she had competed around 40 times in air pistol in the world and Asian level competitions.

Heena had won the World Cup Final gold in air pistol in 2013, with a final world record score of 203.8, which still stands. She has also won two World Cup silver medals in air pistol in 2009 and 2014. She and her coach husband Ronak Pandit felt that the two events help each other, even though a lot of times it did not work in their favour, especially in training. They also felt that there was no experienced person to guide them, the way the seasoned coach Anatolii Piddubnyi had guided them when he was alive.

There were more psychological issues, for lack of clarity of thought, but they did not get solved despite expert assistance. Consistency was lost, even though the preparation was good. The realisation was that there was no soft way to good performance.

COMMENT: The committee feels that Heena Sidhu and Ronak Pandit's assessment of their performance was accurate about the absence of a mentor of the calibre of Anatolii Piddubnyi. We also believe that she has now reached a stage of her career where she has to take some tough calls regarding her events. Maybe she should use the training year (2017) to judge whether the 25m sports pistol actually complements her favourite 10m air pistol. Clearly, there has been complication of matters and she essentially needs to get back to the simple aspects of shooting. There was no collaboration with the national coach Pavel Smirnov, which did not help the situation.

Apurvi Chandela:

Was competing in her first Olympics. Shot 411.6 following a series of 104.2, 102.7, 103.3, 101.4 and placed 34th. Had been troubled in preparation in coordinating all the arrangements. Had suffered frost bite in Russia during a cryotherapy session. She needed physiotherapy sessions to recover from the problem. Had tried to prepare well by competing in Europe. Coach Stanislas Lapidus struggled to get the sanction for adequate training.

Into the Olympics she was better prepared, but on the night before her competition, had people knocking her room door as a fresh batch of Indian athletes had arrived in the Olympic village. The coach felt that she was exhausted because of all the commotion and lack of good sleep. She had shot a silver in the World Cup Final in 2015, and was one of the four Indian shooters to win an individual gold medal in the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. In the World Cup in Rio earlier, she had shot 415.7. The cut off in the final for the Olympics was 415.9, a score she had bettered in at least four international competitions with a best of 418.4 in the Changwon World Cup when she won a silver.

COMMENT: The Committee feels that the claims of coach Lapidus about the struggle to get funds for training are misleading. Apurvi's case was one of the first to be approved in the TOPS scheme. However, funds could not be released until Apurvi submitted a training plan and schedule. The lack of experience and monitoring caused Apurvi to have an accidental injury during her cryotherapy session. It must be noted that all cutting edge scientific training must be under the guidance of suitable experts, which was obviously lacking. The committee also feels that lack of sleep or disturbances on the eve of competition should have been visualized and the athlete could have been protected, or better prepared.

Ayonika Paul:

Tried to capitalise on the Olympic quota that she had won at the last moment, at the expense of Pooja Ghatkar in the Asia Olympic qualifying event. Shot 403.0 after four points were deducted for unsuccessful protest on two shots in the last series. Finished 47th among 51 shooters. Had a series of 102.0, 104.5, 102.5 and 94.0.

A shocking performance by the girl who had shot 420.8 and placed eighth in the World Championship in Granada in 2014. She had shot 418.2 for the fourth place in the World Cup Final in Gabala in 2014. Had shot 417.3 for the bronze medal in Maribor World Cup the same year. Had shot 417.7 in the Asian Games in Incheon for the seventh place. In two World Cups in Rio and Munich earlier in the season, she had shot 416.4 and 417.2 respectively.

There were two coaches working with her, Thomas Farnik and Suma Shirur.

She was ready in the final phase before the Olympics, but had switched off mentally in the last series during competition.

COMMENT: The Committee feels that Paul's approach to the Olympics shows the flip side of allowing athletes, especially young ones, the power to chalk their own course. They are clearly not equipped or mentally ready to shoulder the responsibility. The projection of Thomas Farnik as the coach and Suma Shirur only as a mentor, was purely for financial gains. The records and documents presented to the committee proved that Suma was the full time coach. There has to be absolute honesty of effort while preparing for the Olympics. The NRAI needs to address confusion over the presence of two coaches, one in person and another on paper. The committee further believes that it was immature on the part of Paul to have protested the two shots in the last series of the Olympics, without consulting her coach.

Jitu Rai:

If there was one shooter who evoked maximum confidence of winning a medal, it was this army lad. A string of World Cup medals, including two this season, apart from the World Championship silver and the Asian Games, Commonwealth Games gold medals. However, he finished eighth in air pistol after making the final, and missed qualifying for the free pistol final with a "7" on the penultimate shot.

In air pistol, he had shot 96, 96, 98, 96, 98 for a total of 580. In the final, a string of 9s cost him progress towards a medal.

In the 50-metre free pistol, he had a series of 92, 95, 90, 94, 95 and 88, for a total of 554. He missed the final by two points. He had shot a "6" earlier.

COMMENT: The committee feels that the foreign coach Pavel Smirnov did not have the expertise in the precision events to help Jitu Rai win an Olympic medal. Rai's admission of his inability to find a working relationship with Smirnov further put the shooter in a precarious position of coming up with his own training plans. The lack of expertise for the best shooter in India despite no dearth of support from the Army and the government further highlights the lack of proper planning. His extraordinary talent was taken for granted to deliver an Olympic medal. Any level of talent is irrelevant without correct preparation for the Olympics.

Prakash Nanjappa:

A good air pistol shooter who did not get to shoot his best event owing to an abrupt change in policy that threw him out of the reckoning. Had never any good coaching, and realised what coaching and training was all about when he trained with a Korean for the Olympics. Preparation was affected as there was no proper training in India and support from coach. Got the funds released very late and the preparation proved inadequate.

During competition, struggled with vision issues owing to watering eyes caused by Bell's Palsy that he has been coping with, for years. A sudden spell of cold breeze caught him ill-equipped, and the coach told him to wipe his eyes before every shot. It was a contrast to the hot and humid conditions during the pre-event training when he was shooting in fine rhythm. A poor start of 85 in the first series took the sting away from his challenge, but he came up with a fighting performance to record scores of 90, 91, 93, 95 and 93 for a total of 547 that placed him 25th among 41. Another classic which proves that good guidance is more important than all the money that you can shower in the name of Olympic preparation at the last minute.

COMMENT: Issues with the national coach Pavel Smirnov impeded his training and preparations for the Olympics. After repeated requests by Nanjappa, the coach still delayed in giving him a clear training plan and the attention that he deserved. It was after repeated snubs that Nanjappa went out and managed to find a reputed Korean coach in April, who prepared him in the best possible manner. However, the delayed training cost him better performance.

Gurpreet Singh:

A talented shooter, good in many events. He had a very good performance, except for a 90 in the 4-second series that possibly cost him a berth in the final, by two points. His other cards read 100, 99, 90, 97, 98 and 97. His 97 in the 4-second series the second time showed his ability to shoot well under pressure. A training stint with Ralf Schumann, the greatest rapid fire pistol shooter ever, with three Olympic gold medals and two World Championship titles, had done a world of good. But, the fact that he had to shoot air pistol, possibly cost him precious time of preparation. Despite the army support and being part of the national team, he did not get the preparation required to strike the way Vijay Kumar had done in the London Olympics. Lack of clarity, lack of planning, and definitely lack of options complicated matters for him. The situation was, without shooting air pistol, he could not have shot his pet event, the rapid fire pistol in the Olympics. His proposal for training with Schumann did not get sanctioned in time. Another case of much money too late.

COMMENT: While he came up with a creditable performance, the lack of coherent coordination between the NRAI and the Army did cost him a shot at a medal. It must be noted that while he was training with one of the legends of the sport, last minute preparations cannot win you an Olympic medal. Change of coaches, even to a world class one may not produce desired results when done at a later stage.

Abhinav Bindra:

Felt that it was the best preparation in five Olympics. Did everything within his power, without thinking about winning the gold medal. In the final, out of the first eight shots, except for a 10.7, the rest ranged from 9.7 to 10.4. That did not give him a good base to fight for the medal, even though he made it close with three high scoring shots. The sight specifically made to tackle the darkness of the final range had broken by accident. In the shoot-off he had to take his chance as per strategy to shoot quick. It did have an impact but Serhiy Kulish was cool in coming up with a 10.5 that eventually took him to the silver medal.

Bindra had shot the best 10 shots in the last phase of the qualification series that put him in the final. He had a series of 104.3 104.4, 105.9, 103.8, 102.1 and 105.2. He did feel that he had the energy and experience to tackle the final in tough conditions. The qualification was arduous as he was forced to second aim every shot to get them better. The additional lighting for television had caused a lot of problems and it was a struggle to cope with it. In all, it was a good closure for a brilliant career, even though it lacked the fairytale finish. A classic example of how resources and expertise can be best utilised with sincerity, despite all the physical troubles that he had to counter on a regular basis. He lacked the luck, and the presence of coach Gaby Buehlmann behind him. Of course, Gaby's husband Heinz Reinkemeier did his best to help Bindra fire close to his best at the crunch.

COMMENT: It was good closure of a brilliant career, even though it lacked the fairytale finish. A classic example of resources, planning and expertise can be best utilised with sincerity, despite all the physical troubles that he had to counter on a regular basis. It also must be stated that the best planning, preparation cannot script the ideal result.

Gagan Narang:

It was his fourth Olympics. He had already won the bronze in air rifle in London. Knew what it takes to win an Olympic medal. Gave himself three chances but the coach was categorical that he did not prepare the best, especially in terms of his physical condition. He was carrying weight and did not have the endurance to finish strong. He had the maximum work load because of three events.

In air rifle, he started strong, with rounds of 105.3, 104.5, but slipped to 102.1, 103.4, 101.6 before winding up with 104.8. He missed the final by nearly five points.

In 50-metre rifle prone, in which he had won the Olympic quota, Gagan had his best chance but slipped on the last six shots, and missed the final by 1.7 point. A 9.5 on the 55th shot followed by the low 10s on the last four shots put him out of the final. He had a series of 104.7, 104.4, 104.5, 103.0, 104.0 and 102.4 for a total of 623.1.

In the rifle 3-position, he had 383 in kneeling and 395 in prone but 384 in standing, fetching him a total of 1162, only good to put him in the 33rd place. Being the only one with experience among the three rifle shooters who trained with coach Stanislas Lapidus he had been doing a lot of managerial work and had to assist Chain Singh when he was hospitalized during training in Switzerland. A lot of distraction and lack of physical preparation, the inability to find the right ammunition took the sheen away from his challenge.

COMMENT: Coach Stanislas Lapidus was very clear that his training schedule was not followed by Narang, which was informed many times to the NRAI. However, no action was taken. The issue of fitness was ignored and the NRAI was in the dark about Narang carrying a heel injury into the Olympics. Proven athletes who have the means provided to them must be closely monitored to ensure that training plans are diligently followed. The NRAI must be in constant touch with the expert to have a clear picture of their training phase. It was a clear case of an athlete not being ready to take the load of three events. The lack of monitoring and coordination between all the stakeholders clearly caused the NRAI to take an ill-informed decision.

Chain Singh:

The army shooter competing in his first Olympics, had doubts planted in his mind that his spot may be taken away when he fell ill in the run-up to the Games. As coach Stanislas Lapidus lamented in a series of emails to all the authorities, there was lack of proper preparation. Did have the support of army, but there was no coordination to get the best out of the system.

In his favourite rifle 3-positions event, shot 1169 and missed the final by five points. He had 391 and 398 in kneeling and prone positions respectively, which kept him in the reckoning for the final. A score of 380 in standing put him out of the final. The coach felt that he also lacked the endurance to be at his best for lack of adequate physical training. He was unlucky to get nine 9.9s, as the coach pointed out, in the standing position.

In the prone event, he shot 619.6 following a series of 104.1, 101.0, 104.4, 102.4, 103.9, 103.8 that placed him 36th. Hard to find fault with someone who had to battle severe health issues even though the medical experts had given him the clearance to compete. Was also a victim of late clearance of funds, and a shocking lack of urgency to ensure quality preparation and coordination towards the same.

COMMENT: When it comes to the Olympics, cold and ruthless decisions should be taken in the best interests of the country and not decisions that are seen from the prism of political considerations. If there was even a ten percent doubt on his fitness a replacement should have been pursued. Sanjeev Rajput had won a silver medal at the Baku World Cup in 3-position ahead of the Games and was in good form. The NRAI also did not coordinate the training of Chain Singh with the Army Marksmanship Unit. The AMU was coordinating directly with OGQ for tickets etc. of its shooters and it comes a surprise when Chain admits that the training plans were rather haphazard. It is a similar theme running across other shooters as well. There was absolutely no monitoring by the NRAI which felt it had done its duty by recommending TOPS funding.

Mairaj Ahmad Khan:

Olympic debut at 40, and a fine performance with a score of 121 out of 125. Missed the berth in the knock-out in the shoot-off. He had lost the gold at the same range in the World Cup earlier in the season, when he had shot 122 in qualification, in another shoot-off.

Coach Ennio Falco had prepared him the best right through and with a bit of luck, could have won an improbable Olympic medal. He had a series of 24, 25, 23, 25 and 24. Eventually, Gabriele Rossetti of Italy who had won the shoot off on 121, went on to clinch the gold. Goes to show how close it was.

COMMENT: A commendable performance. A good example of an outside shot , who was sincere, being able to perform very well simply by following the plans of a good coach for a long period.

Manavjit Singh Sandhu:

Had a chance to make the trap final with a perfect last round. With 115 following a series of 23, 23, 22, 25 and 22, he was 16th. It was the lowest score in four Olympics, even though the coach Marcello Dradi felt that it was his best performance. A world champion in 2006, two-time World Cup gold medallist and six-time Asian champion, has not been able to solve the Olympic mystery.

Knew after three rounds on the first day that he was one short of the final. Needed two perfect rounds. Shot one and missed the second bird in the fifth round, which took away the intensity of his approach.

Got into trouble losing a lot of weight in the run-up to the Olympics, which forced him to change the stock of his gun. Had good preparation but shooting only his fourth competition with the new stock in the Olympics. The coach felt that it was difficult to change his mind.

COMMENT: The inflexible attitude of Manavjit Sandhu despite repeated failure in the Olympics is disappointing. It was time to adopt a new approach. Coach Marcello Dradi also stated that actual training with him was negligible, despite Sandhu spending majority of his time in Italy. There was no paucity of

funds, but there was no inclination to take the right path. The rapid weight loss in the run-up to the Olympics was done without expert advice, leading to a lot of complications.

Kynan Chenai:

First Olympics. Shot 114, following rounds of 22, 23, 22, 24 and 23. Was distracted with the confrontation between coaches Marcello Dradi and Mansher Singh in the run-up to the Olympics. Had good exposure to mind training in the US, with Lorenzo Beltrame who had worked with tennis giants like Jim Courier and Pete Sampras. Coach Dradi felt that he was shooting well till he went to the US, and backed with the argument that he had shot 123 in the Baku World Cup

Kynan was not happy with the result but satisfied with the effort in training and during competition. Feels confident that he would tackle the next chance better with the experience and knowledge that have been acquired the hard way.

COMMENT: It was disappointing to learn that there was absolutely no supervision from coach Dradi during training camps in Masari, Italy. There was possibly too much repetition in cementing errors, instead of improving on them. By backing him with an Olympic berth, the NRAI invested in the future. It should continue to support the talented shooter with more international competitions.

The Terms of Reference

The NRAI President had mandated this committee with certain terms of reference to help it get to the reasons which resulted in the inability of the Indian Shooting team to win a medal at the Rio Olympic Games.

Earlier in this report, it has been mentioned that the committee met key personnel, shooters and coaches, who were part of the Olympic team. The committee had also sought recommendations from shooters regarding the current state of Shooting in the country and these inputs have been incorporated in the findings to the specific terms of reference.

- 1. The interaction of NRAI with SAI, SAIs/GOI's funding under TOPS to shooting athlete, in specific the issue of unproven personal coaches and the effect of a resulting ineffective homogenous national team. Then to make recommendations, if any, in how NRAI should take this matter up with SAI/GOI in a cordial and meaningful manner with a view to streamline any issues flagged therein.**

It is now widely accepted that the Government of India's Target Olympic Podium Scheme, TOPS, had shortcomings. However the sport of Shooting was always a priority for the Sports Ministry and the Sports Authority of India and no shooter suffered as a result of any bureaucratic delay. Any delay which occurred did so because of the inability of the shooter to present relevant training plans on time rather than the disbursement of funds. Training funds were sanctioned for all shooters who put forth their plans and in that regard TOPS was rather partial to Indian Shooting based on past results.

Based on the interactions of this committee with various people, it is now pretty evident that in the current scenario, the Indian shooter is on a whole, ill-equipped to come up with his or her own plan and needs expert guidance. Training for the Olympics is very different from training for the World Cup or an Asian level competition. It is also perhaps fair to mention at this point that of the 12 Indian shooters who competed in Rio, only four had prior experience of an Olympics.

The NRAI as a parent body should have assisted the shooters in this matter. Most of them were dependent on teammates or others to assist them in these tasks and there is a consensus that it was not a 'happy experience'. The responsibility of the shooter three months before an Olympics is to concentrate on shooting and not on booking airline tickets or hotels for a coaching stint!

The NRAI should initiate a meaningful dialogue with the Sports Ministry and the Sports Authority of India and apprise them of the benefits of having the National federation in the loop with regards to training plans and also progress reports. It will also create a second layer of checks and balances and those plans will then be able to stand scrutiny by a competent authority.

It is imperative that the NRAI works with the Sports Ministry to revisit its guidelines and ensure that the federation is at least part of the planning process of funding the athletes. That way there will be no repetition of the embarrassing position Olympic finalist Suma Shirur found herself in. There is a massive disconnect between the NRAI's position on Ayonika Paul's Coach and the TOPS funding cleared by the Sports Ministry. Shirur had been training Paul from September 2015 and it was because of her inputs that Paul was able to shrug off her inconsistent form and bag the quota in January 2016. However the TOPS application of Paul had Austria's Thomas Farnik as coach purely to access more training funds and even Shirur was unaware of the existence of a second coach on paper till very late. This miscommunication and bizarre situation could have been avoided if the NRAI had been consulted by TOPS and this would have ensured better preparation and better coordination.

The Committee went through the credentials of all coaches hired as personal coaches under TOPS and did not find any of them unproven. The private coaches were also extremely competent with most of them having had fairly successful careers, either as shooters or as coaches.

Finally there was no way to create a homogenous environment, because there was no system in place for shooters to avail of the necessary facilities as a collective group. They were taken out of the Federation's umbrella the moment they signed up for grants from TOPS and this must be addressed. They were forced to scramble and salvage what best they could. It was no surprise that it was haphazard.

Recommendation: The NRAI should have a competent person as a point of contact who is capable of dealing with the stakeholders ensuring that everyone is on the same page, leading to effective monitoring.

2. The role of national coaches/camps and the effect on their output with the advent of unproven private coaches on the efficacy of their preparation programming for the team.

The word 'coach' has lost its meaning in the context of Indian shooting. Range officers are being nominated as coaches as a matter of political convenience. The coach is one of the most important cogs in the wheel and cannot be a political appointee. Similarly the NRAI should ensure that each of its teams, be it the senior or junior squads should have the best possible talent both in terms of domestic and foreign coaches.

The title National coach has become nothing else than a titular one. Or if one has to be brutally honest a National coach is just a glorified manager. There has been absolutely no coordination between the National coach, the foreign coach and the personal coach. Surely this cannot be a recipe for success when they are all working at cross purposes.

Far from condoning private coaches, the NRAI should be grateful to them for doing bulk of the work. National camps have been few and far between leaving individual shooters no option but to engage private coaches. It has to be mentioned here that only National Junior coaches Jaspal Rana and Deepali Deshpande have been able to command respect as coaches and have been able to guide young shooters on the correct path towards success built on sound basics which is now reaping excellent results.

The NRAI should learn from the success of Rana and Deshpande. Indian Shooting has seen many highs over the years and it is time to draw on that experience and get former shooters on board and groom them as coaches for the future. There has to be a structure for evolution of coaches as well. India cannot be reliant on sub-par foreigners as coaches. India's success in world shooting needs top quality coaches to take Indian shooting to the next level. Those days are long gone when any one will do to fill a vacant position. It is equally important to absorb and elevate Indian shooters to those key positions. The committee would also forcefully want to point out that shooters who are hired as coaches should be remunerated on merit and not based on their nationality.

The question of unproven private coaches can only be raised when we have competent National coaches. As mentioned in the previous point, the personal coaches are far more capable than the National coaches appointed by the NRAI! Kanwar Randhir Singh is the current National coach in Rifle, Syed Wajid Ali in Pistol and M Padmanabhan and Amarjang Singh are Shotgun coaches.

Disturbingly none of these coaches have any record to back their claims as either coaches or as shooters. Perhaps the NRAI could argue that these were the best people they could find for the job but that argument stands exposed when there are shooters with impeccable credentials like Anjali Bhagwat and Suma Shirur coaching promising young shooters in Pune and Navi Mumbai respectively. They should be entrusted with the task of guiding Indian shooting. Similarly there are many more qualified shooters in Pistol & Shotgun. But while it is important to find the right coaches, they also have to be empowered. As one coach asked, what is the point hiring coaches with a big salary if their inputs were not taken on board. They are the experts. They have to be backed to the hilt. Only then can they deliver.

Indian Shooting will consistently churn out results only if there is a proper system. Private coaches take the shooter to a certain standard. Beyond a point they too have to 'let go' to ensure the growth of the shooter. For that to happen the National coach too has to be competent and be in a position to take over the responsibility and coordinate with the private coach. The National coach should also work closely with the foreign coach in that regard if one is available. It may be an individual sport but there has to be an entire team backing the shooter for sustained success. There has to be a sharing of the workload with a common vision and a clear and coordinated method of working, something that Rana has achieved with great success in the Junior Pistol squad. The Chairman did inform the Committee that even in his case, his personal coach Heinz Reinkemier was in touch with the then foreign coach Stanislas Lapidus and both were on the same page with regards to his preparation for the Olympic Games.

It is extremely appalling to find that the NRAI does not have a single coaches report over the last couple of years. The NRAI when asked for such reports for reference by the committee replied that it had stopped asking for coaches reports because SAI had stopped asking for them! A Coaches and Manager's report has to be mandatory after every camp and competition. It has to be specific and the Coach should list out his goals and training methods for each shooter before the camp begins and then the measured progress for the duration of the camp. A similar report has to be sought during competitions as well. At present the progress of a shooter is measured on the basis of their world ranking. General statements such as these do not have any place in modern sport and show that the NRAI has a long way to go towards reaching the global standards in charting a shooter's trajectory.

Equally shocking is the complete disappearance of the 'camp' from the national calendar. It is shocking that camps for all shooters have not been held for more than twenty days in the

last two years! Shooters confess that camps held prior to departure for a competition or one just before a trial cannot be classified as a camp as it was not going to enhance their skills. No real work is being done on skill development which is the foundation for sustained success.

Camps cannot be held without any planning or technical inputs. The timing of the camps has to be in consultation with all the people involved. At the moment, it is on an ad hoc basis. Skeet coach Ennio Falco and former rifle coach Lapidus were of the view that the coaches have to be empowered to decide the dates the camps in consultation with the international calendar. No shooter is going to change his or her technique ten days before departure for a competition.

There has to be a team of competent coaches to take care of the coaching camps. The camps have to be more holistic in nature, they need to have proper staff, experts, quality physios, psychologists, doctors, strength and conditioning experts. Even after repeated requests of the coaches and specifically the junior coaches, no effort has been made by the NRAI to enhance the quality of the camps, and provide necessary back up. The performances have generally gone down because of the lack of skill development and a failure to address it.

It is extremely disappointing to note that the NRAI is washing its hands off the camps, when faced with logistic issues. The camp is held in Tughlakabad, and the shooters stay at the Nehru Stadium. The coaches complain that they have to close the camp by noon to ensure that the shooters get their lunch. The quality of food is also a big issue. It is for the NRAI to step in here and see to the comforts of its shooters. The NRAI cannot be at the mercy of SAI and every problem cannot be outsourced to SAI. If there is a problem NRAI should step in with corrective measures and sort it out with SAI later. The NRAI should take inspiration from the Hockey federation which doesn't wait for eternity to sort out any problems that occur during the conduct of the national camp.

It is appalling that basic issues like food cannot be taken care by the NRAI. The NRAI must insist that SAI serves lunch to the campers at the Tughlakabad range, that was the norm earlier. In case SAI expresses its inability then the NRAI should take charge and arrange for a caterer to provide food at the range itself. The NRAI should also look at alternate lodging arrangements near the range to avoid the large distance between Nehru Stadium and the range. There are minor federations like Rowing which have in the past dipped into their

meagre resources and kept camps running from their own expenses when there have been no sanctions from SAI. Clearly the NRAI has better means and cannot hide behind the excuse of SAI. The SAI does not run Indian Shooting, the NRAI has to be more pro-active. It should

create a buffer fund to take care of logistics in case sanction is delayed or rejected by SAI. No camp of Hockey ever got rejected!

The NRAI has to make the National camp a must attend for its shooters. Too often there have been complaints of shooters not turning up citing one excuse or the other. The overall standard of the camp should be better than what the shooter can provide themselves. The camp has to be a place of learning and the shooter should aspire to be called up for the camp.

The NRAI must realise that the buck stops with them. While taking credit for the medals comes naturally to it, being an integral part in the skill development of its shooters should be the onus of the federation.

It pains the committee to learn that the national junior pistol coach Jaspal Rana's request for a shed to keep the cycles, which he had himself arranged, could not be entertained. This is just a basic example but it exemplifies the NRAI's inaction and helplessness.

Recommendation: The NRAI needs to hire competent coaches. It needs to start grooming former shooters with a long term vision. The sanctity of the national camp must be restored. The camp has to be a skill development one and cannot be confused with pre-departure camps. The NRAI will have to start taking ownership of the camps and its athletes, everything cannot be outsourced to SAI.

3. The effect of non-benign private sponsorship organizations contracting athletes directly, without any form of coordination with NRAI and the effect it has on the athletes capability to focus on the core issues of training and working to an NRAI driven programme instead of directly funding select recipients to pursue an additional private agenda of competing overseas, acquiring short term coaches and mental trainers, thus adding a third dimension to an athlete's mind and existence and the conflict it induces with the NRAI/SAI driven, if any.

The Indian sports system has not become that comprehensive to be able to run all by itself. The private agencies are basically filling the gaps, and work with a sense of urgency that is rarely seen in government organizations. The classic example is the delayed sanction of funds for Olympic preparation despite the majority of the Olympic quotas having been achieved more than a year in advance. Coach Stanislas Lapidus has struggled to get the machinery moving despite dozens of written communication.

The private agencies that provide the support are essential and are basically the life savers for the athletes, who have the vision to prepare well. Till the NRAI/SAI can provide holistic support, Indian shooting will depend on these agencies.

However, what stops the NRAI/SAI from coordinating with these agencies? Or for that matter, ask the shooters to give in writing what sort of support that they derive from these agencies and why they had to seek such support. The NRAI has willingly looked the other way for all these years. It should take the lead in ironing out every possible roadblock for its shooters. If a competent national coach coordinates between the national federation and the shooters, there will never be any confusion. It is because of the lack of quality personnel who have the interest of the team in their mind that has led to a disjointed team India, where only individuals are visible and no team.

Compared to the government, the private agencies spend precious little money, but they do take care of the crucial part. The government may provide personnel who are incompetent for the job, naturally forcing the shooters to seek quality where it is available. If there are competent personnel attached to the national teams like physios, doctors, trainers, mind trainers, good armourers, everyone would only be too happy to seek their support. Sadly they aren't.

It is wrong not to provide these type of support, and doubly wrong to find fault if an external agency provides the same. The duplication of expenditure on same heads, which some may be misusing to their advantage may easily be avoided with proper communication. There is nothing to hide on this subject.

Recommendation: The NRAI should work with these agencies and ensure there is no overlap of resources. The goal is the same.

4. The effect of the running parallel training programme for Services athletes by introducing/ensuring that such athletes work with foreign coaches that are not the national foreign coaches and the resultant confusion the athletes have had to deal with, if any, and how to coordinate better with such institutional organisations in a wholesome and more productive way so that NRAI and such institutions complement each other better in the interest of the athletes with both junior and senior athletes.

It is a good thing that the shooters when they are not in national training camps, which incidentally have become rare in recent times, have an organisation like the Services to provide them the support. It may be noted that the NRAI has acquired, rightly or wrongly, a series of coaches who have served the army. It may suggest that they are competent people with proven record, or else, how would a national federation show interest in them. If such people are training shooters, it is a welcome situation. If the national coaches are competent, they would easily coordinate such additional training to ensure the overall growth and quality of the shooters.

The unfortunate scenario is that there are no personnel to bind the national team, let alone coordinate with the other agencies. First of all, the NRAI needs a structure in its coaching system. There has to be a competent head and group of accomplished shooters and personnel, who can take care of all the shooting related aspects. The administration and the shooting excellence roles have to be clearly distinguished. Once that is done, these types of problems will get resolved automatically. At the moment, there is no meeting point for all these type of coaches and coaching systems. Once a person or a group of persons are introduced with the responsibility and accountability, they will take care of these matters for fruitful coordination. As pointed out earlier, any external support should be welcome, and it is a managerial job to ensure that it supplements and not contradicts the national interest.

Recommendation: NRAI should have a robust working relationship with the Services. The NRAI should also use the world class facilities of the AMU in Mhow and consider the possibility of holding skill development camps there away from any distractions. The Services have over the years provided many shooters to the Indian team and this relationship has to be tapped and enhanced.

5. The effect or otherwise of kith/kin being accepted by government as coaches of athletes, and the practice of kith and kin accompanying athletes privately or otherwise during and for competitions overseas.

As addressed in a point above, there is a lack of competent personnel employed by the NRAI. The shooter is well within his or her own right to request a personal coach. There are increasing examples of such coaches happening to be related to the shooter in concern. There has to be a single standard applied across the board irrespective of the identity of the shooter. If the person being accepted as a coach is qualified and the selection is based purely on merit, then there can be no objections and it cannot be treated as a matter of convenience. The NRAI should be in a position to coordinate this, if it has competent personnel who have the capacity to judge such kith and kin.

The committee strongly feels that it is impossible to stop parents the right to accompany their children on tours. However certain checks and balances have to be put in place to ensure there is no undue advantage. It has been brought to the notice of this committee that there have been numerous occasions where parents have accompanied their children on tours and sought the support of the national coaches for their requirements. This has to end. Parents cannot expect the NRAI and its coaching staff to coordinate travel and logistics. In the case of the junior teams, there should be no accreditation for accompanying kith and kin if they have no technical knowledge. Furthermore they cannot stay with their children during either camps or competitions abroad and neither can they enter the field of play even in India during camps. The same applies to kith and kin of the senior shooters as well. During the shooting hours, the role of the national coach is paramount and it has to stay that way. Shooters have to be tough, it is ultimately they who fire alone at the firing point and they have to learn to overcome their homesickness. The Olympic village is a very lonely place and one has to be ready for it.

6. Further, to identify the causes which have contributed to the apparent lack of endurance towards the end of each match by our athletes (mentally and physically) by examining the training programmes undertaken for the Olympics and more importantly the individual athletes themselves and identifying the plausible and probable reasons for the failure of our athletes. Thereafter to make recommendations, if any, to elevate such issues for the future.

This point has been addressed earlier. The Indian shooters did not have a long term plan to perform at the Olympics. It was all haphazard and last minute barring a few. There weren't too many qualified experts to assist the team in their preparation.

Indian Shooting still does not take mental training seriously. Most of the shooters supported by OGQ have been working with Mr. Vaibhav Agashe. The Shooter has to trust the mental trainer and not everyone will be compatible. A few shooters went and sought out experts around the world after paying top dollar but clearly it did not work.

The NRAI has not woken up to the demands of sport science and it is high time it does. There is a pressing requirement for hiring a professional and qualified physio for every ten shooters in a camp, be it senior or junior. The less said about the physios deputed by SAI the better. Support staff play a significant role in the development of athletes, and the NRAI should not depend entirely on SAI and take a leaf out of Hockey India which has streamlined operations and put quality personnel at all levels. A system is always bigger than the individual. Each person has to be held accountable for their goals. There need to be physical trainers, strength and fitness conditioners and doctors attached with every team for monitoring.

Physical readiness of shooters competing at the Olympics should be monitored but there was no such system in place. One of the coaches informed the committee that this was one of the worst preparations ever and in hindsight it is absolutely correct. There was no holistic preparation, either in terms of physical and mental training. The few who did, like Mairaj Ahmad Khan, succeeded because of holistic preparation and because of a planned coaching and training schedule with qualified personnel over a long period of time.

7. Further, to make recommendations on the view the federation must take wherein the athlete has participated in multiple Olympic Games and has displayed no improvement at all on all occasions, in such a case though the athlete may on merit as per the NRAI Olympic/World Cup selection policy me number one should such an athlete be fielded again or not.

The committee does not feel it can be called on to deny any shooter the right to compete at the Olympics. There is no guarantee for success in the Olympics, no matter all the right things one does in terms of preparation. Indian shooting definitely does not have such abundance of talent and competent shooters that one can take a step of leaving an experienced shooter behind. It is the fundamental right of an athlete to represent the country, when he or she is the best. At the Olympics, experience is an asset.

There are any number of examples in which shooters have succeeded in winning an Olympic medal late in their career. There are many examples of world class athletes who have not been able to win an Olympic medal. There is no guarantee that someone would fail for ever, especially when he or she is the best in the country. Indian shooting has definitely not reached a stage where it needs to draw a policy on a subject like this.

The NRAI should look at ways to improve bench strength. It is only through natural progression that a shooter can be denied the opportunity. One can only draw comparison with the recent record of a seventh Olympics for Leander Paes at Rio. While one commends him for his dedication and longevity it is a telling statement on the lack of talent in Indian Tennis. The NRAI must avoid falling into the same trap. It has to look at ways of getting more and more shooters shooting high scores and making their mark. That is possible, stopping someone from competing is not.

8. Further, to make recommendations for the better management and correct use of the training base of the Indian shooting team at Tughlakabad, and any effect or otherwise its current operational system may have had or not on the performance and preparation of the Indian shooting team for Rio as well as other international events.

The Dr. Karni Singh Range in Tughlakabad is one of the best in the world, but it lacks maintenance. Despite years of requests, something as basic and necessary, as the shade and covers for the electronic targets have not been provided. The spares cost a lot of money, and despite repeatedly being refurbished, there is a general fear among the shooters that the range cannot guarantee correct scores on the electronic targets. It is viewed as a better business proposition than a functional range. Many crore of rupees have been spent in repairing the machinery, when experts feel that new machines would have cost much less. The property belongs to the SAI and the NRAI can do precious little about many things.

If competent authority, even a proven expert like the army, runs the range and utilises the space, possibly for a world class residential facility, gymnasium, swimming pool, etc., Indian shooting would be on a different plane.

The shooters go to places like Italy or Germany only because the ranges at home are not functional and do not have a favourable working atmosphere. A shooter should be able to get into a range 6 a.m. and be able to start training without any delay. With so many breakdowns for so many reasons, the range in Tughlakabad is much feared to waste time and resources, when shooters negotiate tough traffic to reach there. The junior shooters are forced to stay at the Nehru Stadium and have to wind up their training by noon so as to ensure that they get their lunch when they return to the stadium. Wasting so many hours travelling to the range and back not only saps the energy but kills the enthusiasm of one and all.

Once again, the problem is very basic. Efficient utilisation of the range with competent authority and machinery, would cut the cost of Indian shooting dramatically.

As in the case of quality national camps, wherein those who miss out should feel that they have lost something, the main range in the country should offer so much that all shooters become keen to visit the range and capitalise on it.

Increasing charges for the shooters so much and charging big sum of money for small banners etc. for supporting agencies only discourages everyone. There should be many events and training camps at the range. Young shooters should practice on normal targets before they graduate to the electronic targets. This would ensure that the machinery is not mishandled for lack of expertise.

Except for the weather, everything else can be controlled towards providing world class facilities, provided there is a will to do so.

In fact, as was suggested by one eminent shooter, the NRAI and SAI should have many weapons and equipments, available for loan by shooters who cannot afford to own them for various reasons.

Recommendation: The Tughlakabad range is effectively the home base of Indian Shooting. The NRAI needs to be more pro-active in looking after it and needs to come up with a workable solution with SAI to ensure the range is available to its shooters when they want and not when the officials decide to turn up.

9. To make recommendation for the centralization or otherwise of all shooting activity under the federation and suggest deterrence in case of violation by organizations, coaches, or athletes.

The NRAI is the nodal body for Shooting in India. There can be no alternate power centre. It is the duty of the NRAI to use its goodwill and persuade State bodies to follow its lead and promote shooting in their spheres of influence. Shooting in India is growing and the larger numbers will lead to more talent coming through. However it is still plainly obvious that certain states exist for the purpose only of that of a vote bank. Each state needs to have an active and functional shooting programme. Every state needs to be create the basic requirements to enable shooters to shoot. The NRAI as the parent body must oversee the development of state shooting schemes as ultimately they will provide a feeder line.

10. To recommend or otherwise a system that NRAI should undertake to make (if necessary) itself, athletes, coaches and support staff more accountable, ministered and monitored by suggesting the creation of a system or creation of a professional high performance management and monitoring system on a permanent basis which shall constantly throughout the Olympic cycle focus on the efficacy, effectiveness, and battle readiness of our national squad, contribution of foreign coaches, participation of athletes in camps and fulfilment of personal training programmes given to athletes by coaches and identifying tailor made individual sustenance each athlete may require in terms of technical, physical or psychological needs that each athlete must get.

All these points put together are taken for granted in an efficient national federation. If there was one thing missing big time, it was the monitoring of everything in terms of Olympic preparation. If there is a system and protocol in place, with competent officials, these things would be automatic. As specified earlier, there is an urgent need to have a core group of competent people who will completely take care of the shooting aspects of the federation. The administrative side of the federation may well focus on generating funds, making the sport popular. There is a general tendency to heavily rely on government funds and that is the foundation for all problems.

For example, a flight ticket to Gabala that may cost INR.35, 000, is not bought at the right time due to lack of sanction from SAI, and the purchase of the same ticket for INR100,000 only shows an inflated budget for the sport. If money is earned the hard

way, there will be an urgency to be efficient in dealing with expenses. Indian Shooting needs to learn to manage its expenditure. There are various ways obvious to control wasteful expenditure and priorities should be set before the beginning of the season. There is no need to compete in every tournament. Tactical decisions can be taken like equipping the entire junior team with proper rifles and pistols as suggested by the Junior coaches instead of a competition.

It will be a good idea to introduce a Shooter Passport, in which the shooter, coaches and other agencies keep noting points, providing clarity about the shooter and his or her status overall. Like a school progress report, which is not only about marks any more, the shooters need to be monitored for various aspects, technical and otherwise, so that they themselves get a clear idea about where they stand and their goals.

The physical trainers and mind trainers should also have provision to fill useful data and details, which any monitoring agency should be able to summon and get clarity. A lot of confrontation and duplication can be avoided with such a practice. A computerized copy should be available as a backup in case someone loses such a precious document!

Competent personnel are required to execute such an idea.

11. To examine the NRAI's junior programme and render comments or suggestions for the further enhancement of the programme with a view of focus being lent to the immediate, medium, long term creation of Olympic champions by incorporating the principle of maximum quality bench strength in every Olympic event of shooting sport.

The results of the Junior teams have been very exciting over the last couple of years and all coaches deserve a pat on their backs for the consistency of results. However, the true success of a junior program can only be measured in terms of the successful transition of the juniors shooters into the senior squad. That remains a major worry with few having been able to break through.

Juniors need mentors and top quality coaches. Top juniors need to be consistently monitored and nurtured during the transition period or else they slip into the abyss from which very few return. The Senior and Junior coaches should be in regular touch and there has to be a specific coach from the national panel looking after the juniors in transition.

The junior coaches have been crying for support in terms of quality support staff, physios, trainers, doctors, mind trainers, yoga experts, etc. The junior programme is the base of everything, and with the NRAI acknowledging that 50 per cent of the budget is allocated to the junior programme, it is shocking to note that the junior programme is largely left to the junior coaches, and the NRAI has done precious little to back them. The committee has seen numerous communication sent on topics ranging from yoga experts, kit, food, discipline, to professional coaches, etc., evoking very little response from the federation.

The junior coaches have to be given the support, in terms of personnel of their choice. The committee has seen the request for a certain specific foreign coach being turned down, while the appointment was made with a person known more as a "grip maker" than a coach. The junior coaches must be empowered to take decisions and deal with the matter of indiscipline as they seem fit.

It has been observed that Foreign Coaches for juniors are to be brought in for training camps prior to International Competitions. Their services should rather be used for skill development camps as that will benefit the juniors develop much more effectively.

The NRAI should urgently expedite the formulation of a Code of Conduct for all its shooters at all age levels. This could be done by the Athletes Commission with strict penalties laid down to deter habitual defaulters. Since the juniors will be covered under this as well, it would make sense to include the three junior coaches for the formulation of this Code. The Code should have been in place many years ago. The NRAI should ensure a Code of Conduct is in place before 1st January 2017.

12. Finally to fix responsibility where it needs to on a person, an organisation, or persons, or athletes who in the view of your committee must take the ultimate responsibility either a group, or individually, or otherwise.

Once competent personnel in terms of a Shooting Manager, and a core group of high quality professionals are entrusted the job of taking care of the shooting aspects, they will be accountable, provided the administration supports them in the best possible way.

Competent people will come up with quality ideas but the execution part will be the responsibility of the federation. In the absence of such accountability, ultimately the responsibility of the no show in Rio rests on the NRAI.

13. Any other issue deemed relevant by the Chairman of the committee.

Selection Policy: The committee is of the view after hearing various shooters and coaches that the NRAI should review its selection policy. It could also look at revisiting the MTS policy which some feel is restrictive and an impediment to the growth of numbers. The selection policy for the 2020 Olympics should be announced in 2017 itself to ensure it is scrutinised and debated before its implementation. The NRAI should make the final policy ready and applicable from January 2018 so that all shooters are aware before the start of the Olympic qualifying process which begins at the World Championship. It must also be stressed that once approved there should be no change in the policy.

Calendar: There is a pressing need for a scientific and comprehensive domestic calendar. The NRAI is urged to ensure that the national and foreign coaches are consulted before notifying the calendar. Most of the Olympic team had to shoot meaningless trials within a month of the Olympics and in the case of Skeet three shooters had to shoot for three places on the team. Camps and trails cannot be announced to fulfill obligations to SAI. They have to be based according to the international calendar. The NRAI must also take into account the schedules of shooters who are students and ensure that trials are not scheduled during exams. There should be a skill camp at the beginning of the season and all foreign experts must be present. The NRAI could look at inviting the top eight shooters from the nationals for the camp. It makes more sense in investing in a strong domestic calendar than spending needless money on conducting international competition in India. The NRAI should weigh its options before offering to host more competitions.

Nationals: The National must be seen as an aspirational event. At present the cutoff score for qualifying for the Nationals is too low and should be changed to ensure better quality in terms of quantity. That in turn will lead to better competition in the State competitions and the Mavlankar.

High Performance Manager: The NRAI needs a High Performance Manager who will coordinate between the Shooter, the Coaches, the NRAI and SAI and will be accountable to the Governing body of the NRAI. The HPM should ideally be a person who is Needs to be someone who is not a part of the NRAI but understands Shooting. Like every Coach/Manager etc the HPM will be assessed at the end of the year by the President, Secretary General and Technical Committee. The HPM must be insulated from the 'political pressures' within the NRAI. No decision of the HPM can be overturned except by a full majority at the NRAI Governing body

Appointments: The NRAI has to have a committee of experts to appoint coaches. This will ensure no sub-par coach, domestic or foreign will be appointed. The panel has to comprise

the National Coach in that event, at least three shooters who have won medals at Olympics, World Championship, Asian Games or a World Cup/World Cup Final medal and the High Performance Manager. Each coach being appointed to a position has to appear before the panel and explain his or her vision. There has to also be an annual review of coaches which can be undertaken by the same panel. The dependence on sub-par coaches has to end

Support Staff: The NRAI needs to appoint a full time Logistics Manager to coordinate travel for various teams. Similarly the NRAI needs to appoint a full time Armourer who will be based at Tughlakabad and who can be approached by Shooters any time of the year.

Coaches: the NRAI needs to empower its coaches. Coaches have to be able to make informed selections. As a test case basis the committee recommends the NRAI empower Ennio Falco to pick one shooter for every competition in his Skeet team as requested by him and Mairaj Ahmad Khan.

Revenue: The NRAI must end its dependence on SAI. The NRAI has to look at ways and means of generating sponsorship and becoming self sustaining. The NRAI has signed up with a commercial partner and it must allow the commercial partner the freedom to market the NRAI in whatever way it feels like with the ISSF statuettes being the benchmark.

Athlete Friendly Federation: The NRAI must work towards becoming a more shooter friendly organization. The NRAI needs to start taking ownership of its shooters and that in itself will lead to a lot of problems getting solved. The welfare of the shooter must lie at the heart of every activity and decision of the NRAI. The shooters go through much trouble in getting even minor matters solved. The NRAI must learn to treat every shooter at every level, be it youth, junior or senior or even a beginner with respect. It has to be in the DNA of the NRAI.

Zero Tolerance on Discipline Issues: There has to be a time bound resolution of all discipline matters. There can be no laxity in issues of indiscipline.

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