

**Injeti Srinivas, Director General, Sports Authority of India's Tour
Report on visit to Bonn, Germany on 24th May, 2015**

23.05.2016 : Reached Bonn at 7.30 PM.

24.05.2016: Joint Secretary Onkar Kedia and I had a day-long meeting with the senior officials of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) at their Headquarters at Bonn on 24th May, 2016. The following agenda items were discussed during the meeting:-

- i) Participation of Indian contingent at the Rio-2016 Paralympic Games.
- ii) SAI & MYAS perspective on the newly elected management of Paralympic Committee of India (PCI).
- iii) Required reforms for PCI.
- iv) Issues relating to Paralympic development in the country.
- v) The unfortunate incident connected with Olympic classification which occurred at Dubai IPC Olympic grand Prix.
- vi) Proposed para-sport centre at Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- vii) Other initiatives for development of Paralympics in India.
- viii) Concluding remarks

Mr Xavier Gonzalez, Chief Executive Officer, Mr Mike Peters, Chief of Staff, Mr Qayser Sachedev, NPC Services Manager, Mr Georg Schlachtenberger, Director represented IPC. Joint Secretary Onkar Kedia and I represented Government of India.

2. The gist of discussions which took place on each of the above mentioned agenda items and the consensus arrived at are enumerated below:-

- i) Participation of Indian contingent at the Rio-2016 Paralympic Games.

On the issue of participation of the Indian contingent at Rio-2016 Paralympics, the IPC officials conveyed their satisfaction with the information pertaining to the entries received from SAI. Designated nodal persons have been appointed on both sides (SAI & IPC) for this purpose. I informed that 15 Indian Para-athletes are likely to participate at Rio-2016, as compared to 10 in London 2012 Paralympics. The IPC officials conveyed that after examination of 3 possible options, namely debarring participation of Indian athletes, participation of Indian para-athletes under IPC flag; participation of the athletes under the Indian flag, they have, in principle, decided to proceed with the 3rd option, ie. participation

of Indian athletes under Indian flag taking into consideration the positive efforts being made by MYAS & SAI and the recently held elections to PCI. However, the IPC has decided that the present arrangement of SAI discharging the core responsibility with respect to filing of entries of athletes, coaches and other support staff will continue till the conclusion of the Rio-2016 Paralympics, even if the present suspension of PCI is lifted in the meantime.

(ii) SAI & MYAS perspective on the newly elected management of Paralympic Committee of India (PCI).

On the present status of PCI, I made the following points:-

- The PCI has had a chequered history with its suspension by the International body on more than one occasion.
- The Government has notified a National Sports Code-2011, which lays down good governance principles to be followed by all National Sports Federations, including PCI, which was recognized since 1992.
- The internal disputes and factions within the PCI have negatively impacted its ability to steer the Paralympic movement in the country. SAI, which has taken up the responsibility to manage Paralympics in view of suspension of PCI cannot discharge this function indefinitely; and there is an urgent need for having a duly recognized body in place for governing Paralympics in India.
- The elections in the instant case were conducted in accordance with the National Sports Code 2011 and a Government representative was deputed as observer as was done by IPC.
- Based on the report of the Government observer, MYAS ^{has} given its inputs to IPC for consideration.
- Accordingly, it's for IPC to take a final view in the matter factoring all relevant aspects in this regard.

(iii) Required reforms for PCI.

With respect to the reforms required in PCI, I highlighted the need to engage some professionals to look after technical development of Para-athletes. It was pointed out that at present the structure of PCI was not in full consonance with the structure recommended by IPC. At present, 19 National level Sports Federations dealing with Para-sports are affiliated to PCI, besides 24 State Associations. It was noted that as per the IPC approved structure, PCI is required to handle Athletics, Power-lifting, Swimming and shooting directly; and archery, table tennis, badminton and wheel chair tennis through existing National Sports Federations for able bodied in these sports disciplines. With respect to Wheel Chair

Fencing, Wheel Chair Basketball, Sitting Volleyball, Boccia and 7-a-side Football are to be managed by separate National Sports Federations that are independent of PCI. I explained to them that time bound efforts could be made in that direction, but sufficient time should be given for this. It was indicated to them that certain reforms such as making able-bodied National Sports Federation to take on the responsibility of Para-sports as well to make their sport inclusive could be taken up to start with. Similarly, Wheel Chair Basketball, which has been developed in a professional manner in the country, could be considered for recognition subject to fulfilling necessary prerequisites.

(iv) Issues relating to Paralympic development in the country.

I informed them that the Government has a very pro-active policy and equitable treatment is extended on par with able bodied sports, in areas such as financial support, job reservation and award money for medal performance. It was highlighted that for a vast country like India, it would be necessary to have adequate number of recognized classifiers so that classification of Para-athletes can take place starting from grassroots level. Technical domain expertise was another area which was identified for collaboration between SAI and IPC. I indicated that SAI would be open to engage a Technical Director on secondment basis, apart from short term consultations on need basis. Coaching education was also identified as an area in which IPC can support SAI.

(v) The unfortunate incident connected with Olympic classification which occurred at Dubai IPC Olympic grand Prix.

The IPC officials informed that the post Dubai incident things have drastically improved and they were satisfied with the amendments made by SAI. I informed them that the incident was unfortunate and perhaps could have been avoided with better planning. I explained to them that many aspiring athletes were extremely keen to participate, even though they were not classified. SAI acceded to their request but there were some hiccups in timely uploading of documents which may have led to the unfortunate incident. I, however, told that the incident was now behind us and we look forward to a healthy collaboration with IPC.

