



FROM THE DESK OF

RANINDER SINGH

Chairman, Organising Committee ISSF World Cup, New Delhi 15h to 26th March, 2020

PRESS RELEASE

New Delhi,
6th March, 2020

Dear All,

The last fortnight has seen a dramatic increase in the number of our member nations falling prey to the spread of the Coronavirus also now known and designated as COVID-19.

From the limited origin of mainland China, and since the categorisation of it by the WHO as a global epidemic, this virus has, to the time of the filing of this release, made its contaminant presence felt in 93 countries and territories around the globe. This has quite rightly evoked sovereign national governments to issue advisories on travel to and from nations to their home nation. We have seen over 80 million people quarantined in China, the closing of schools & universities in Italy, as well as the cancellation and deferment of a host of social and sporting events globally.

Some of these events have been IOC designated Olympic qualifiers and others national Olympic selection events in various nations internally.

The New Delhi combined World Cup (Rifle, Pistol, & Shotgun) has been no exception in terms of the impact on it as a consequence of the virus and its envelopment of the globe. As a consequence of the accelerated spread of this malady, from the confirmed original participation at this event, 23 nations, consisting of 240 athletes and a 114 accompanying officials have been obliged to withdraw their participation from this event.

As the OC & the ISSF HQ could not guarantee that all athletes would be able to attend the World Cup due to a strict health regime being employed by the Government of India and the possibility of some athlete(s) from some nation(s) possibly being quarantined upon arrival in New Delhi, though no such happening has come to pass, it is a possibility that cannot be discounted in a competition of the original magnitude that this World Cup was at the beginning.



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Due to the above and other associated reasons, the ISSF was obliged to withdraw ranking points to the Delhi World Cup (for finalists and medal winners only MQS was retained). This in turn has clearly also contributed to the withdrawal of some of the afore mentioned nations, though it is difficult for us as OC to asses exactly how many that would entail.

Here, the OC would like to extend its deepest thanks to the Ministry of External Affairs and their Missions in all competing nations who have with speed and great commitment undertaken the issuance & subsequent reassurance of visas to all athletes who wished to participate in Delhi. Though electronic and upon arrival visas have for the nationals of most nations been suspended, Indian Embassies and High Commissions overseas have been most receptive and thoroughly cooperative in all competing nations, including even nations declared sensitive by GOI in assessing and issuing traditional passport stamped visas to our applicants. We are equally grateful for the active support afforded by the Ministry Of Youth Affairs & Sport, as well as the Sports Authority of India, the IOA, Delhi Police, Customs at IGI, and the management of GMR at IGI airport in affording virtual 24 hour issue based support in our joint endeavour to make this competition an unparalleled success.

In principle the ISSF is obliged to support the sovereign decision of health of all nations in regards to their national interest and the protection of the health security of their citizens, indeed as per the *Olympic charter* specifically under:

'The Mission & Role Of The IF's In The Olympic Movement' specifically **clause 1.8** (Section 26, page 56) specifically charges each IF to:

'to encourage and support measures relating to the medical care and health of athletes'.

Thus, reluctantly such a decision has been made given the current unprecedented medical circumstances that are prevalent .

Therefore, and after deep reflection and debate, & despite it being fully cognisant of the fact that it shall as a consequence be saddled by substantial financial losses, the OC has today recommended to the ISSF & its President, Mr. Vladimir Lisin, that the New Delhi World CUP (Combined) that was to be conducted between the 15th and the 26th of March be postponed.

The OC has further proposed to the President of the ISSF that this combined World Cup now be broken into two separate fully empowered World Cups, the first for Rifle & Pistol only to be conducted in the first week of **May (5th -12th)** & the second for shotgun events only to be conducted in the first week of **June (2nd-9th)**this year.



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The OC has also requested the President to accord his consent so that both these World Cups would see the ISSF restoring full ranking points other than & including those for MQS. We are confident that this shall be deeply appreciated by all competing nations and their athletes.

The ISSF has informed the OC that it has taken this forward with the IOC, and expects its decision in this regard very soon. Upon receipt of this specific clearance by IOC, the ISSF shall disseminate this to all via the media & by placement of this fact upon its web site. The OC shall also follow suit echoing the IOC's announcement.

We would also like to specifically address to related issues. The first is that we realise that this is the peak dry heat period in India, however, given the timelines handed down to the ISSF by the IOC within which the Olympic qualification process has to be completed for the Tokyo Olympiad, there is no other option or Calendar opportunity to conduct these World Cups at a Calendar period of more inclement weather. We however have full faith in our athletes understanding that we have to close ranks and face this epidemic with its consequences together, and on a lighter note, after all we have all competed in snow storms as well which in contrast represents the other excess of the vagaries a shooting athlete must face from time to time, and in compliance with the existing rules governing our sport.

The OC would of course make all practice and feasible arrangements to try and mitigate the effect of hot weather to the maximum by employing innovative overlays to help in providing competing athletes and officials a comfortable environment to compete.

Finally, the OC is also deeply aware of the disruption to athlete training cycles and preparations such changes cause, it is for this purpose that in recommending the new dates to the ISSF president, the maximum possible time between the original & new dates has been provided for. The OC believes that should the President accept its proposal, & the IOC accord its necessary approval, it shall allow all athletes sufficient calendar time to rework their training and preparation cycles with a view of re-peaking their performances on the suggested dates.

In the coming weeks, all our nations and the global family, shall face trying circumstances and both the OC & the ISSF wish all concerned member federations, athletes, Jury Officials, Range Officials, its huge and loyal volunteer force and above all the fans of shooting sport & the visiting public in general of New Delhi; the sincerest best wishes and extends its deepest compliments in wishing all a very safe and healthy time until we congregate at New Delhi first in May & then subsequently in June of this year.



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The contents of this release are in the knowledge of the Government Of India, and the IOA, as well as has its in-principle acceptance to the suggested deferment and redistribution plan.

This press release is therefore released in the public interest.

Thanking you,

I remain yours truly,

Raninder Singh

President, NRAI

Vice President, ISSF

Chairman, OC ISSF World Cup, New Delhi, 2020.