

# ROWING INDIA

— 2021 —

**TURNING  
PAIN**

**INTO  
POWER**

KNOW YOUR  
**COACH**

G.S NAIR



ROAD TO  
**TOKYO**

2021 World Rowing  
Asian & Oceanic Olympic  
& Paralympic Qualification  
Regatta

KNOW YOUR  
**ROWER**

KHUSHPREET KAUR

KNOW YOUR  
**CENTRE**

VISIT OF  
**SHRI KIREN RIJIJU**





# SECRETARY GENERAL

**ROWING FEDERATION  
OF INDIA**

**M. V SRIRAM**

Dear Friends in Rowing,

It gives me immense pleasure in communicating with you all through this edition of our newsletter.

Hope you and your families are doing well and wish you the best in the months ahead.

In the quarters gone by, Many Things Have Happened. Many Things could not Happen.

Be it as it may, in spite of the adverse conditions present everywhere, with the second wave of the pandemic hitting most of the country with many places still reeling under its impact, which is refusing to die away as we may wish, the good news is rowing activity has sprouted back in a small way in many centers across the country.

Outdoor activity has commenced, but in a guarded small way in most rowing centers.

I am happy to report that many of our affiliates have innovated and adapted to the ground realities of day and conducted Indoor State Championships successfully and some other have been bold enough to move on to the waters and run their State Rowing Championships with the necessary safeguards and precautions, as well.

In another competitive front, we saw some very good and encouraging participation in the World Indoor Rowing Championships from India with many records and positions created.

This is one event where we can make a mark in the world arena with some more mentoring and preparation in advance, if this event continues in this format, in the years to come.

Our Olympic Qualification preparations are well under way with our Men's squad practicing at ARN, Pune and our Women's Squad at Bhopal. Final selections to zero in on the team concluded on 10th and 11th at ARN, Pune and on 13th in Bhopal.

I wish the selected team the very best to do well at the qualifiers at Tokyo from May 04th to 07th.

Hopefully we should do well and qualify for our sixth Olympic appearance and improve on our positions and move up the ladder.

Nothing more to add as we go to press. Until the next time see you all and Be Safe and Be Smart.

Cheers

**M.V Sriram**  
Secretary General





# VISIT OF SHRI KIREN RIJJU

## HON'BLE UNION SPORTS MINISTER TO THE ARMY ROWING NODE

Sh Kiren Rijju, Hon'ble Union Sports Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports visited the Army Rowing Node on 18 Jan 2021 along with officials of Sports Authority of India. Brig Sports and Director Mission Olympic Wing were also present during the visit. The Hon'ble Minister was astonished with this sports venue and its infrastructure. The Hon'ble Minister admired the officers and training staff of the Army Rowing Node for maintaining the node up to the international standards.

The visit of Hon'ble Minister was conducted by Commanding Officer of Army Rowing Node, Colonel Sandeep Chahal.

The Hon'ble Minister interacted with the campers of three ongoing National Coaching Camps who are preparing for upcoming International Rowing events. The Hon'ble Minister also interacted with training and administrative staff of ARN. The Hon'ble Minister was mighty impressed with the world class infrastructure and training being imparted to rowers and assured all the necessary support from the Sports Ministry and Rowing Federation for the betterment of the Rowing sport in India.

The visit of the Hon'ble Minister prior to Olympic Qualification Regatta boosted the morale of the rowers. Team ARN was successful in conducting this visit and as always pushing the limits towards achieving its aim of winning of Olympic medal for the country.

The sequence of events conducted during the visit of the Hon'ble Minister is as following:

**The Hon'ble Minister was received and given a short brief on history, vision and modus operandi of the Army Rowing Node.**

**Hon'ble Minister then witnessed a 500 meter rowing sprint race on the International Rowing Channel.**

**Hon'ble Minister visited all major infrastructure including Gymnasium, boat sheds and Rowers' accommodation.**

**Hon'ble Minister also visited the Rowers' mess and had lunch with the Rowers followed by a short interactive session with rowers before departure.**





Army Rowing Node (ARN) was raised in the year 2001 on the banks of River Mula which runs across Pune City of Maharashtra State. ARN was raised under the aegis of Mission Olympics Wing of the Indian Army with an aim to win an Olympic Medal for the Country. This is the only international standard, man-made rowing channel ever constructed in India in the year 2009 by the Corps of Engineers of Indian Army along with Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO).

# KNOW YOUR CENTRE

## ARMY ROWING NODE

The "one of its kind" sports venue includes the following infrastructure:

- FISA Standards Eight Lane Rowing Channel.
- Timer Huts, Starter & Aligner Huts & Finish Tower.
- Viewers' Gallery with a capacity to house 600 plus spectators.
- Boat Sheds to house 100 plus boats.
- World class air-conditioned gym including rehabilitation platforms.
- Rowers' Accommodation including mess facilities.

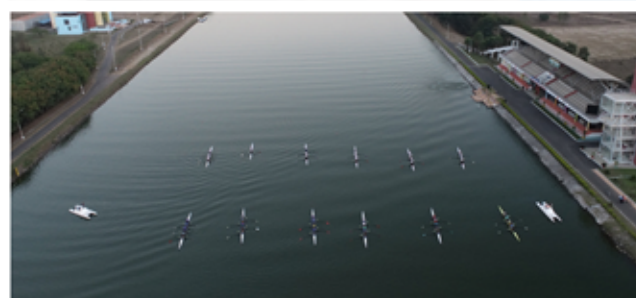
The efficient training team of ARN has the best of coaches and supporting staff in the country. Additional sports science specialists like Nutritionist, Psychologist, Physiotherapist & Strength and Conditioning Coach are hired and employed to improve the performance of rowers. Beginning from rowers' selection into ARN till their peak performance, each rower of ARN is trained by imparting quality training using scientific methodologies and best out of the best are scouted to represent India. Data and progress cards of every rower is maintained and analysed frequently. All rowers are counselled by the training team regularly and improvements are suggested if required.

ARN has successfully conducted three National Rowing events. Currently three National Coaching Camps for preparation and training of Indian Rowing Teams are under progress at ARN. These teams are scheduled to participate in the following Rowing Events:

- FISA Asia & Oceania Olympic Qualification Regatta, 2021.
- 20th Asian Rowing Championship, 2021.
- Paralympic Olympic Qualification Regatta, 2021.

Recently Sh Kiren Rijju, Hon'ble Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports visited the Army Rowing Node. The Minister appreciated the well maintained infrastructure and efforts of Army in training world class rowers.

Perfect weather conditions of Pune city and an eco-friendly campus makes ARN an ideal place for Indian rowers to push their limits. The marvellous infrastructure of ARN is fit to take on any International Rowing event. Currently the ARN is commanded by Colonel Sandeep Chahal. This prestigious organisation of the Indian Army, strives round the clock with a firm vision towards its aim.





# KNOW YOUR ADMIN



## COLONEL SANDEEP CHAHAL

Colonel Sandeep Chahal of Corps of Engrs took over as Commanding Officer of the Army Rowing Node in August 2019. The officer himself is a keen sportsman and has represented India in Basket Ball. The officer during his YO.s and Degree days was part of Officers' Rowing Team. While he was posted in CME as Instructor in year 2005, Col Chahal was closely involved in construction of CME Rowing Channel. As Commanding Officer, he is responsible for identification of fresh talent, training of rowers and conduct of rowing events at ARN. The officer's dedication and involvement towards promoting rowing in all the feeder nodes is highly appreciable. The officer has looked after the welfare of each and every rower and continuously raised the standards of the ARN. The officer is also in charge of all the National Coaching Camps being conducted at ARN. During the recent pandemic, the officer ensured no rower is infected by enforcing strict COVID precautionary measures. The officer has upgraded the node with advanced technology equipment and infrastructure. Col Chahal along with his training team is striving hard towards achieving the aim of winning Olympic Medal.

## SWARNIM VIJAY MASHAAL

To Commemorate the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the 1971 Indo-Pak War, RFI Coach, Sub Major Amit Singh of 1 EME Center, Secunderabad, was given the honour to run with the "Swarnim Vijay Mashaal" on 13 Feb 2021.



## ARMY DAY

Olympian and Dhyani Chand awardee rower Manjeet Singh was felicitated by Chief of Army Staff on the occasion of Army Day 15th Jan 2021.





# KNOW YOUR COACH

G.S NAIR in conversation with Atiriya Dasgupta



From an international swimmer with unbroken swimming records to rowing coach who produced record-breaking rowers, G.S Nair is a man of great adaptability and perseverance.

G. S Nair started his sports career as a swimmer and had made quite a mark by winning a silver and bronze in Asian Swimming Championship in 1980 and had created national records which remained unbreakable for several years. G.S Nair was introduced to the sport rowing in 1989 when the SAI Alleppey camp was first established. He was trained to be an expert coach by the then Olympians, World Cup winners and foreign coaches who had come to India to train the rowers. Later, he completed his FISA level course in 1992 at Kolkata and FISA Coaching Academy Course in 1999 in Banyoles, Spain. He was highly influenced by the foreign coaches which pushed him to be the excellent coach he was. Initially, he was facing difficulty in adapting to the sport which was completely unknown to him, but with dedication and hardwork, he proved himself to be a great coach.

With him as the State Coach, Kerala started acing the National Championships and in 1993 the Kerala State Rowing team won the overall championship. Under him rowers such as Dittymol Varghese, Jincymol Varghese, Thara Kurian have trained who have kept the tricolour flying high in the international championships. Among all the races he has experienced, his favourite memory is of Jincymol Varghese winning bronze in IX Asian Rowing Championships in 2001.

## G.S Nair's Mantra to Pre-race Jitters

“

He believes in listening carefully to the pep-talk the coaches impart before the race and to have confidence in oneself. To have the Indian jersey on one's back and bring laurels for the country, it requires complete willingness to work hard and insane level of dedication. Complete faith in the coach and physical and mental preparation must also be there to achieve the goal.

”

G.S Nair has shaped the base of international India Rowing over the years and has created the role models who inspire the budding rowers to achieve what they think is impossible. Little light was shed upon India rowing pre-2000 but with G.S Nair's help, a lot is known about the time when role models were themselves training to be the best among the best.





# KNOW YOUR ROWER

## KHUSHPREET KAUR

**When 21 years old Khushpreet Kaur took off her running shoes and took up the oars, she did not even have the faintest thought that one day, she would be bringing laurels for her country in rowing.**

Originally hailing from Bathinda, Punjab, Khushpreet was originally a state-level athlete. Upon taking part in a Talent Hunt Camp, she got spotted by the rowing coaches and she got shifted to Bhopal for her rowing training.

**She started turning heads by clinching the bronze medal in the single sculls category at her first Senior Nationals held at Hussain Sagar in 2019.**

Within a couple of years, Khushpreet Kaur struck double golds in the Asian Continental Qualifiers 2021 for World Indoor Rowing Championships in the U-23 2000m and 500m category.

**In the World Indoor Rowing Championships, she secured the 11th position in the U-23 500m category with a timing of 1:41.1 minutes.**

Upon being asked about how she felt after the race, she replied that she felt extremely elated and was on literally cloud nine. Her coach, Dalvir Singh was extremely satisfied with her performance and proud of her. Khushpreet was the only rower from the Bhopal camp to partake in the championships.

Amidst the gruelling pandemic, when the world was gradually acclimatizing to the destructive ways of the pandemic, Khushpreet was already well ahead in her game and was practising with a burning passion to have the tricolour printed on her jersey.

Her day began at 5:00 am and her morning practice sessions began at 6:00 am in the morning and continued till 10:30 am. Again, it resumed from 4:30 pm in the evening and continued till 6:00 pm.

She travelled from the Academy hostel which is about a kilometer or so from the practice venue by the bus provided by the academy. Her diligence and sincerity during training sessions along with her zeal to win made her dream come true.

Khushpreet is now training for the Olympic trials and dearly hopes to qualify as the first female Olympian rower in India. Khushpreet Kaur has set the benchmark of achieving her goals in such less time. Her sincerity, confidence and integrity made up for the lack of experience in rowing and has become a new role model for the up-and-coming rowers of the country.



# INDOOR ASIAN QUALIFIER

## ASIAN CONTINENTAL QUALIFIER FOR THE WORLD ROWING INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP 2021

With entries open for all age groups ranging from Juniors to Super Masters, the Asian Continental Qualifier for the WRICH was held on January, 24th and saw a huge participation from across the continent. The Qualifier hosted both the 2Km and 500 metre events and served as a qualification round to the World Rowing Indoor Championship finals.

India secured a total of 13 medals at the event, of which 8 were Gold. All the medal winners automatically qualified to compete at the WRICH event. Apart from the medal winners a few other rowers who made the qualifying time also got to qualify for the WRICH event.

### Asian Continental Qualifier for the World Rowing Indoor Championship

#### 2000 metres

MEHUL KRISHNANI	MEN UNDER-19	GOLD
PRATIK GUPTA	MEN UNDER-23	GOLD
KHUSHPREET KAUR	WOMEN UNDER-23	GOLD
AVINASH KAUR	WOMEN UNDER-19	SILVER
PARMINDER SINGH	WOMEN UNDER-23	SILVER

### Asian Continental Qualifier for the World Rowing Indoor Championship

#### 500 metres

MEHUL KRISHNANI	MEN UNDER-19	GOLD
AVINASH KAUR	WOMEN UNDER-19	GOLD
KHUSHPREET KAUR	WOMEN UNDER-23	GOLD
ASHISH PHOGAT	LIGHT WEIGHT MEN UNDER-23	GOLD
RAVI	LIGHT WEIGHT MEN	GOLD
HARWINDER SINGH	MEN UNDER-19	SILVER
MADHUMITA DINESH KUMAR	WOMEN UNDER-19	SILVER
TARUN KRISHNA PRASAD	MEN UNDER-23	SILVER



#### IN CONVERSATION WITH SANJAY JAIN

I have been rowing as part of exercise since 2001. I was introduced to it at my Gym - and it became my primary cardio there. I rowed a fair bit in those days, including completing multiple marathons, etc. I finally purchased a rowing machine around 2005, so that I could row at home. But it has been on and off (mostly off, since I travel a lot). But last year, my weight hit a peak and I decided to get back to exercise in feb. And then, travel went away due to the pandemic, and I used my time well - rowing regularly. When I heard about the rowing championship going virtual, I decided to give it a go, because it helps to set a goal. My lifetime best for a 2K is 7:14.7, which I reached in Dec 2002! I have been working towards a target of 7:00.0, but I still have a long way to go. I am currently based in Bangalore.



# ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING

The Rowing Federation of India successfully conducted the 44th Annual General Body meeting of the Federation virtually through the Zoom app on Saturday the 27th March, 2021 commencing from 07pm.

The meeting went on till 08.30pm covering the Agenda smoothly, discussing many agenda points like passing of accounts, budgets and approving previous minutes and also in principle approval of various venues for National Rowing Championships, proposed to be conducted, as and when situation improves and allows the holding of such Nationals.

What was unique about this year's meeting was that for the first time in the history of our Federation an Annual General Body Meeting was conducted virtually with representatives from as many as 12 affiliates logging in from various corners of our country to attend the meeting.

There was healthy discussion on many topics and exchange of ideas and plans for the future.

This meeting platform and its likes, have facilitated a very smooth, cost effective and innovative method to meet and discuss matters to ride over the dangers of travelling to a common place for meeting.

In the years to come or say, at least for the near future, this is going to be the order of the day to meet and take things forward.





# PARA ROWING CAMP

## Indian Para-Rowing athletes prepare for the Olympic Qualifiers

### Making waves

Para Rowing in India has grown steadily, with our National crews clinching medals at their maiden International appearances

in 2019, both at the World Rowing Cup, Poznan and Asian Rowing Championship, Chungju, South Korea.

### National camp resumes

Braving the insurmountable obstacles faced in their own lives, our para rowers continue to strive for sporting glory, as the National Para Camp having resumes at Pune. The new camp has seen the existing team fortified with 2 more athletes joining in from diversified backgrounds, looking to make strides across the PR1, PR2 and PR3 rowing classes.



### Tokyo calling

Under the stewardship of National Coach Ismail Baig and Para Coach, MD Azad, an Asian Games medallist, the team is training for the Continental Olympic Qualifiers to be hosted by the Japan Rowing Association, at the Sea Forest Waterway, Tokyo, which is the same venue the Olympic Games are slated to be conducted in. The challenge at hand however is the classification of the newer athletes. This is important because each Para Rower must be systematically classified by FISA in order to compete. The classification is based on the disability level of athletes, so those with similar levels of Physical ability can be paired together to fairly compete.

While our teams compete for spots at the Tokyo Games, via the Asian & Oceania Continental Qualifier in May, this will also serve as an opportunity to have our newer athletes certified. This is because rules mandate certification may only be done by certified personnel at specified FISA event venues.

We wish our team the very best of luck, in the run up to the Qualifier Regatta.

## Names of PARA ROWING campers

(5 Men & 2 Women) attending the camp at ARN Pune wef 15 Jan 2021 to 31 Mar 2021 are as follows:

<b>Wg Cdr Shantanu</b>	<b>Devidas Patil</b>
<b>K Narayana</b>	<b>Pooja Ojha</b>
<b>Vajith V</b>	<b>Jyoti Gaderia</b>
<b>Rajesh Pawar</b>	<b>Mohd. Azad - Coach</b>



Rohith Maradapa



# WORLD ROWING INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP

**IN THE FIRST VIRTUAL WORLD INDOOR ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT HELD, 63 COUNTRIES PARTICIPATED WITH 935 QUALIFIED ATHLETES.**

A total of 54 events were held, with participant classes ranging from the U-19, U-23 to the Super Masters' category.

Instead of rowing in a centralized location World Rowing beamed screens with dozens of cameras streaming live from gymnasiums, clubs and even bedrooms.

We had some exceptional results with **Parminder Singh**, an Asian Indoor record holder, placing **6th** in

the **Under 23** event with a **personal best timing of 6:06.9**. Fellow Indian, **Mehul Krishnani**, too placed **12th** in the same event, with a timing of **6:31.4**.

**India had a total of 12 qualifiers as follows:**

1. Parminder Singh	7. Harvinder Singh Cheema
2. Pratik Gupta	8. Avinash Kaur
3. Ashish Phugat	9. Tarun Prasad Gutta
4. Mehul Krishnani	10. Madhumitha Dineshkumar
5. Pooja S	11. Sanjay Jain
6. Khuspreet Kaur	12. Ravi Ravi

Ashish Phugat finished 6th in the U-23 Light Weight Men's 500-meter race, while Tarun Gutta and Sanjay Jain finished 10th place in their respective events, the former being the U-23 500-meter event, whereas the latter was a Master's rower in the 55-59 years, 2000m event. All our other athletes too finished within the top 18 places globally.





# 2021 WORLD ROWING

## ASIAN & OCEANIAN OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC QUALIFICATION REGATTA

### ROAD TO TOKYO

With Olympic Qualification Regatta, slated to be held in the first week of May at Tokyo's, Sea Forest Waterway, the final selection trials at the National Olympic Camps were concluded in the second week of March, 2021.

**The Regatta will have, around 100 participants from 25 countries, competing. RFI will have 7 athletes participating, battling it out for 5 potential spots for team India at the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games.**

Jakar Khan will be competing in the **Men's Single Scull**, while **Arjun Jat** and **Arvind Singh** will be in the **Light Weight Double Sculls** event. **Khushpreet Kaur** will be fighting it out for the **Women's Open Single**, while **Vindhya Sankat** and **Rukmani Dangi** will be in the race for the **Women's Light Weight Double Sculls**. **Sunil Attri** and **Sona Keer** will be reserve rowers for the **Men's and Women's team** respectively.

**Wing Commander, Shantanu**, will be in the ring for the **PR1 Single Sculls** event. The team will be led, by **National Coach Ismail Baig**, **Women's Coach, Dalvir Singh Rathore** and **Mohammad Azad, Para Rowing Coach**. The team will also be accompanied by a 2-member support staff.





# NATIONAL NEWS

## WEST BENGAL INDOOR ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

The West Bengal Rowing Association successfully hosted the State Indoor Rowing Championship on 30th and 31st January. Thirty-three rowers had participated in six categories over 500 meters and in eight categories over 1000/2000 meters in Sub Sub Junior, Sub Junior, Junior, and in Open categories.



## ASSAM ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

The Assam Boat Racing & Rowing Association successfully hosted the State Rowing Championship on 30th Dec 2020. More than 50 rowers had participated in Single Scull & Double Scull events covering Sub Sub Junior, Sub Junior, Junior, and Open categories.



## WEST BENGAL SPRINT ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

The West Bengal Rowing Association successfully hosted the State Sprint Rowing Championship from 26th February 2021 to 28th February 2021. Altogether 190 Rowers had participated in 28 events covering Sub Sub Junior, Sub Junior, Junior, and Open categories.





## KERALA INDOOR ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

The Kerala Rowing Association successfully hosted the State Indoor Rowing Championship on 30th March at Allepy SAI centre. Approx 80 Rowers had participated in various category events covering Sub Junior, Junior, and Open categories



ROWING SPORT HAS RESUMED TO NORMALCY FROM 19TH FEBRUARY AT SAI KERALA, ALLEPY POST COVID LOCKDOWN.



## CHANDIGARH ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

The Chandigarh Rowing Association successfully hosted the State Rowing Championship on 20th March & 21st March 2021 at Sukhna Lake. Approx 150 Rowers had participated in 28 events covering Sub Junior, Junior, and Open categories



## WEST BENGAL ROWING EXPERT COMMITTEE

Congratulation to Sri Gautam Valechha , Vice President WBRA for being inducted in the Expert Committee for Rowing Sport by West Bengal Govt.



ROWING SPORT HAS RESUMED TO NORMALCY FROM 8TH FEBRUARY AT SAI ORISSA, JAGATPUR POST COVID LOCKDOWN.



## WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE HELP OF OUR VOLUNTEER



ATIRIYA DASGUPTA





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