

# Editorial

Imphal, Monday, August 8, 2016

## The pursuit for sporting excellence

After what seems to be an exhaustive wait, the curtains have once again been raised for the world's most anticipated sporting extravaganza - the 31<sup>st</sup> edition of the Olympic Games at Rio, Brazil. The world will, for a few days at least, turn its collective attention to the exploits of the finest athletes and sportsmen in the world. While the spectators will be feasting on the extraordinary show of talents and skills being displayed by the competitors spanning 39 events over sixteen days, for the athletes, it is a display of the culmination of years of the relentless pursuit for sporting excellence - a trial of strength, character, discipline and determination and an opportunity to push oneself beyond the acceptable and expected limits - hence the motto: Citius, Altius, Fortius (Faster, Higher, Stronger). Being in the Olympics is the ultimate hope for any athlete, and winning a medal at the Olympics a realization of the wildest dream. But the dream every athlete dream is unlike the ones ordinary humans do. They have to dream without sleeping, to carry their dream every breathing moment, and to subjugate everything else towards its realization. But to realize the dream of an Olympic medal, the sheer determination and relentless effort of an athlete alone is not enough. For a sportsperson to be the best in the world and perform at its peak, a well orchestrated and synchronized support system needs to be in place working around the clock to make sure that the athlete can focus on the single goal of improving and bettering the techniques, skills and physical abilities to perfection. This is where the country, and indeed the state regarded as the sporting powerhouse of the country come up dismally short. The fault lies not in the total absence of such a system, but rather in the inability to organize and implement such a system in time and in the correct manner. Time, or rather age is the greatest enemy of an athlete, and the time period during which the best athlete can maintain performing at the top is very limited. Showering accolades, prizes, awards and other material and moral incentives is all very good - an effective enticement and encouragement for youngsters to follow suit. There is however the apparent lack of enthusiasm or interest in shoring up a sporting culture at the grassroots level in the country including our very own state. One very important and influencing factor for such an unfortunate situation is the existence of duality of interests in the sporting management. Almost all the sporting events have, at the least, two state level associations or organizations claiming the right to govern or administer their respective events. Manipur Olympic Association, the apex state body entrusted with the important task of promoting and regulating sporting events included in the Olympics in the state have allowed the rot to fester by refusing to put its foot down and take a strict stand in resonance of its parent national body. On the contrary and reflecting the ignorant or dismissive mentality of the individuals running the show in the state, emphasis has continued to be given towards personal ties and future political prospects totally unrelated to sports. Such continued disregard for the real concerns and pressing issues are raising uncomfortable questions regarding the progress and well-being of sports and sportspersons of the state in the days to come. There is only black and white, 'yes' and 'no' in sports. Ambiguities and personal favours should not be allowed to creep in if sports and sportspersons of the state are to have any fighting chance of excelling at the international arena.

Contd. from page 1

## Sharmila ..... continue your struggle

Now, the time has come to reconsider your decision to contest election by sidelining the sanctity of your struggle as it would make a mockery of each and everybody's struggle against AFSPA, 1958 in future. No one can infringe upon an individual's right to have a family. But doing the right thing in the wrong time would only invite a coward's remarks. We must learn from the life of Mother Teresa who never married for the cause of humanity. The people of Manipur know the great service for humanity you have been delivering for the last 15 years and 9 months and do not want it to be lost in thin air. Your struggle should be like Gautama Buddha's struggle for getting SALVATION, leaving behind his family, near and dear ones. We, at MIYC respect the great love between Desmond Coutinho and you but strongly condemn it if Sharmila decides to wind up this people's struggle in the chemistry of their romance with unidentified espionage and reactionary catalysts. If Mr. Desmond loves Sharmila

sincerely, we appeal him to ask Sharmila not to wind up her struggle in true spirit from outside by contributing his mite to repeal the AFSPA, 1958. Desmond may remind of how Dr. Michael Aris helped Aung San Suu Kyi in her struggle for Democracy even though he was denied entry into Burma since December 1995 even with the intervention of Kofi Annan, the then UN Secretary General, Pope John Paul II and many other international prominent figures. Sharmila must also see the possibility to sacrifice her love for Desmond not to derail her struggle against AFSPA, 1958. Sharmila must also know the love for her people or her motherland is the SUPREME SACRIFICE she can make rather than making a meek resolution for a simple person.

We make this appeal to Sharmila to continue her struggle if she still loves the People of Manipur. We want to see the moment people all over the world crown you the "Queen of Peace" when you acquire the highest position of peace in the world.

## Pass book lost

I, the undersigned have lost my pass book of SBI Imphal Branch, MG Avenue bearing account no. 30413269835 on the way between Khuyathong to Thangal Bazar on 5/08/2016.

Finders are requested to kindly hand over it to the undersigned.  
S/-  
Laishram Basanta Singh  
Khurai Angom Leikai  
Imphal, East

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail: [imphaltimes@gmail.com](mailto:imphaltimes@gmail.com). For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-2452159 (0)

## Gau rakshak, fake and genuine: Did Narendra Modi just sanction marauders to maraud?

By: Bikram Vohra

What is the code of conduct for a genuine *gau rakshak* as compared to a counterfeited 'guy'? While it is heartening to hear the Prime Minister of India finally speak out on this issue of self-styled protectors and their bloated bovine-inspired bravado, it is worrying that in calling for a disrobing of the fake *sevaks* he has actually sanctified the vigilantes by saying it is fine to be one just have to make sure you are the real article. And with no attempt whatsoever at humour, I am thinking the next step could be equally genuine lynch-squads for suspected rapists or those cheeky little suds who dare to marry 'downcaste' and expect our regal upper castes to swallow this insult. But hold that thought for now, and let's go back to the cow and motherhood. What is the real article. Let's say you or I are suddenly surrounded by a bunch of men armed with *lathis* and other such implements of power because you could be eating beef (enemy at the farm gate) or transporting a cow and now you are outnumbered and your options limited. Before they strip you naked and put their shoe on your neck or beat you with righteousness for a couple of hours - here's what you say. "Sir can you show me your ID, please, so I know you are genuine?" OR "If

I have to be thrashed at least let it be by a sanctioned officially-certified *gau rakshak* not one of your common garden variety types." Are we going to have a *gau rakshak* ministry that issues certificates like degrees? Do candidates pass a test before they can be given a pass to go create mayhem? After all, the PM has saluted the valiant work of the protectors. Once you do that they will be crawling out of the woodwork in their thousands. These are very real questions, because now the seven or eight hoodlums are coming in closer and asking for a pancard or an Aadhaar card as an identification proof will be a feeble defence because they may not be in the mood to listen. Consequently, unless the PM is prepared to go a step further and explain why he would laud the true 'gau rakshak' and also have it explained, in torturous detail, what actions they can take, the spurious cow boy is going to be tough to counter and this whole issue of separating the wheat from the chaff is moot. *Yo, you are a fake, you don't even have a card, put away that lathi and get lost, you cannot beat me. He can. He's for real. Here, give me a minute to strip. My button is stuck. You want me to lie down here*

*so you can can shove your foot on my face or are you beating me standing up. Oh! You want to check the soles of my feet, could I see your GR licence again, please, just to confirm?* But if you seriously consider Modi's speech on this subject, it is scary. He tells us that out there are bands of brigands faking it but in doing so he accepts that 'gau raksha' brigades are something we need and in this verbal balancing act we fail to understand why, what for, and most importantly, who constitutes this religious police and the authority they have, by proxy? Those pundit types who come on TV and bleat piety. The so-called upper caste twits who believe their blue blood gives them the right to intimidate the rest. It is not just Dalits who are at risk here, so that angle doesn't wash totally. Anyone buying or eating beef, even an innocent non-vegetarian is at a risk from these hoods. And instead of banning all these *rakshaks* in toto and bringing sanity back into the invasion of privacy we are now faced with confirming credentials. No one has told me how to prove that the men coming at me with weapons are Made in Taiwan. Let's take this a step further on this illogical path. After the thrashing, when the video is going

viral and the state Chief Minister, *Rahul Gandhi, Arvind Kejriwal* and a gaggle of opportunists are rushing to the hospital to hold hands with the victim what if he (and who's to say it won't be a woman tomorrow) decides to complain to the cops. If the cops weigh the evidence and discover this is a genuine 24 carat cow protector, is he safe from prosecution? He is the elected vice-president of the *Gau Rakshak Samiti* and he ordered the attack on these vile Indians because there were cows and a partridge in a pear tree in their van. What if the stick wielder had an epiphany and just converted from being a gangster to *gau rakshak* the night before...does that count? He has taken his vows or whatever it is you have to do by way of ritual to make the grade. Come tomorrow, we will have a cottage industry selling GR (gau rakshak) honours degree. Can the cop, in his wisdom, decide that the attack was justified because the fellow is *asli* (genuine). By creating a *gau rakshak* caste system (superior and inferior) we have actually given the signal for marauders to maraud and gangsters to engage in this 'take that' tamasha with impunity. This can only get worse. (Courtesy: First Post)

## Rio Olympics 2016

### Playing first Olympic hockey match in 36 years, India's women make bright start

Thirty-six years after they last walked on an Olympic pitch, the Indian women's hockey team took on Japan on Sunday in the opening match of their 2016 Rio Olympics campaign. Keeping with the occasion, they made a spirited comeback after being 0-2 down to draw 2-2. India were distinctly unlucky in not earning full points; in the last minute, a hard shot by Vandana Kataria was saved by the Japanese goalkeeper Asano Sakiyo. Japan scored in the first two quarters through Eri Nishikori (14) and Mie Nakashima (27). India made a comeback after the break, getting both the goals in the third quarter through Rani Rampal (30) and Lilima Minz (39). With the draw, both teams now have a point each. The draw would be hugely satisfying for the Indians, for no team wants to losing its opening game. But they did play some extremely loose hockey in the first two quarters. Perhaps nervousness crept in, as they were playing their first Olympics match in 36 years. But Preeti Dubey had two weak shots after having the ball in the circle. Even Poonam Rani, who had a good match, couldn't strike the ball powerfully enough to stretch the Japanese goalkeeper. Rani Rampal also had a look at goal, but delayed. So when Japan took the lead with 10 seconds left in the first quarter, it was against the run of play. It was also their first penalty corner and Nishikori was on target.



The second quarter was all Japan, as they stretched the Indian defence to the limit. Unlike the Indians who played in tight groups, the Japanese played on both flanks giving themselves space to rotate the ball. The second goal from Japan was a classic example of excellent poaching. Mie Nakashima had the ball off a cross from the left and she hoodwinked the Indian defence with a lovely deflection. The Indian goalkeeper didn't have a clue. From the Indian standpoint, it was a soft goal. But Japan was 2-0 up. India needed something special in the third and fourth quarters to quell the tide. Considering they weren't finding their rhythm, it would be a tall task. But within 30 seconds of the restart, India were on the attack again and had their first penalty corner of the match. Sometimes, unusual methods are

required to change the tempo of a match, and India did so by bringing back a shot we thought was long forgotten. Rampal, with all the time in the world, took a step forward and hit a straight shot that beat the goalkeeper; it was Rani Rampal's 88th international goal, and it came off a straight hit. The scores were now 1-2. India wasted their second penalty corner, but soon earned a third. This was a period where they were pushing aggressively through the centre, inducing chaos in the Japanese defence. The third penalty corner was weak, but the raised ball was taken on the glove by Japanese goalkeeper Asano Sakiyo. But the defence failed to clear the ball and Minz smashed it tennis style into the goal. Japan went for the referral, but video umpire Lisa Roach gave the goal to India. With the equaliser in, the match was alive once again. The fourth quarter proved to be a tense affair; the counter-attacks kept the fans and defenders on their feet. Both coaches chose to gamble at this point - Japan's Yuji Nagai chose to go all out first. There were times when there were as many as seven Japanese players trying to breach the Indian defence. But Savita Punia had a good match. Having soaked up the pressure until that point, India had the best chance of the match in the final minute, but Vandana Kataria had a good clean look at goal before Sakiyo saved her shot. Neither coach would complain too much about the final scoreline, but with bigger matches coming up, both teams would need to improve their standards. The Indian women's team has secured the 'Olympian' tag, and it is now time to ensure they qualify for the quarter-finals.

### Kosovo's Majlinda Kelmendi wins country's first Olympic medal

Majlinda Kelmendi became Kosovo's first Olympic medalist as she took gold in the women's -52kg judo in Rio. Kelmendi, 25, overpowered Italy's Odette Giuffrida with a yuko to claim victory at her second Games, having represented Albania at London 2012. There was a surprise in the men's -66kg as Fabio Basile of Italy beat South Korea's An Baul in emphatic fashion. The unseeded Basile dominated his opponent to win Italy's first gold medal of these Games. Japan's Misato Nakamura and Russia's Natalia Kuziutina won bronze in the women's event, while Masashi Ebimura of Japan and Uzbekistan's Rishod Sobirov also secured bronze in the men's. Kosovo's Olympic Committee was established in 1992 but only recognised by the International Olympic Committee in 2014. The disputed territory declared independence from Serbia in 2008.

### For Dipa Karmakar, 'deadly' Prodnunova is just another hurdle in quest for glory

By: Sandipan Sharma  
**Rio de Janeiro, Aug 8:** Every time Dipa Karmakar goes airborne, she puts her most valuable asset at risk for the sake of individual glory and a nation's pride: her life. Her life and death gamble tells us a story of a brave girl who would rather go for broke than lead a life of anonymity in spite of heavy odds, lack of money and facilities. Since most of us look at sports through a cricket-lens, let me explain Dipa's daring act with an

analogy: Imagine her as a batsman facing Jeff Thomson - considered by many as the fastest bowler of all time - without any protective gear, standing half-way down the pitch. And the bowler is allowed to target her skull. If Dipa misses, she pays a heavy price. Her vault isn't a leap of faith, it is like jumping from an aircraft without a parachute, hoping to land safely on her feet on a piece of mat. But, on Sunday morning, the 22-year-old from Tripura lived to fight

another day when she became the first Indian to qualify for the Individual vault finals in Gymnastics. Dipa's achievement is huge. No Indian woman before her had qualified for a Gymnastics event at the Olympics. But now, Dipa has a chance to win a medal at Rio. Dipa landed her 'Prodnunova' perfectly enough to emerge among the top eight. She will now strive to make her 'vault of death' better on 14 August, hoping for a podium finish.