

## PRESS NOTE

Justice M.M. Kumar, Former Chief Justice, High Court of & J&K was appointed as Returning Officer by the Indian Olympic Association vide its letter no. IOA/I-28/2023/1350 dated 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 for the purpose of conducting the election of the Executive Committee of the Wrestling Federation of India, which is an affiliate member of the Indian Olympic Association.

After perusing the records and collecting the information from the Wrestling Federation of India, the election schedule was issued as early as 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and the last date for receiving the names for constituting Electoral College was fixed as 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023, by 5.00 PM. On realizing that parallel units of some states (like Maharashtra, Telangana, Rajasthan, Haryana & Himachal Pradesh) have filed 2 sets of nominations, notices for hearing were issued to them for 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 at 3.00 PM. Notice was also sent to WFI and the Indian Olympic Association as both of them have necessary information required to satisfy the eligibility criteria given in Article-XXIV (Para-26) of the Constitution of Wrestling Federation of India. During the hearing two request letters received by the Returning Officer, Justice M.M. Kumar from the Ad-hoc Committee of the Wrestling Federation of India and Indian Olympic Association, to grant them further time for amicable settlement amongst rival sections of State units and other issues. The Indian Olympic Association further added that the prestige of the country before the International bodies was at stake and it would be in the national interest to grant further time of 5/6 days. The request was accepted vide a detailed order dated 21/06/2023 which is available on website <http://wrestlingfederationofindia.org/> and new schedule of the election programme was thereafter released. According to the new schedule, the last date for receiving the names for constituting Electoral College was yesterday i.e. 25<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and the election were to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 after covering various other stages. The revised schedule is also available on website <http://wrestlingfederationofindia.org/> .

However, on 25/06/2023 WP (C) 3757 of 2023 was filed before the Hon'ble Gauhati High Court by the "Assam Wrestling Association" and Anr., against the "Wrestling Federation of India" with the principal request that the Assam Wrestling Association must be recognised and given affiliation by the Wrestling Federation of India as its request has been pending for the last many years but no decision has

been taken. By affiliation with WFI a state unit satisfies one of the conditions for eligibility. The other condition for affiliation is the reorganization from the state Olympic Association.

In the concluding para, the Hon'ble High Court vide its order dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 2023 has directed the Wrestling Federation of India and the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India not to proceed with the election of the Executive Committee of Wrestling Federation of India as per the notification dated 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 issued by the Returning Officer till the next date of hearing i.e. 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

A copy of the aforesaid order has been received in the Office of Returning Officer from WFI as well as from Sh. Azim H Laskar, Advocate. Accordingly, the election programme is deferred till further order and the whole process shall be reviewed after receiving any further directions from the Hon'ble High Court.