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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ W.P.(C) 10342/2019

and CM APPLs.42732/2019, 54682/2019, 16483/2020, 32960/2020, 43562/2021, 31560/2022, 33330/2022, 42691/2022, 54682/2022, 33552/2023, 36897/2024, 48218/2025, 48967/2025

RAJASTHAN EQUESTRAIN ASSOCIATIONPetitioner
Through: Mr. Rajeev Dutta, Sr. Adv., Mr. Ashish Kothari, Mr. Balasurramanian R., Ms. Pratha Pant and Mr. Pratyush Singh, Advs.

versus

EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION OF INDIA AND ORS.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Pragyan Pradip Sharma, Sr. Adv., Mr. Vinajay Bhandari, Mr. Hardik Jain and Mr. Ishaan Phukan, Advs. for R-1.
Ms. Arti Bansal, SPC and Ms. Shruti Goel, Adv. for R-2.
Mr. Amit Sibal, Sr. Adv., Mr. T. Singhdev, Mr. Bhanu Gulati and Mr. Pratham Mehrotra, Adv. for applicant/Chandigarh Horse Riders.
Mr. Ravindra S. Garia, Mr. Shashank Singh, Mr. Upendra Singh Rajput and Ms. Vaishnvi Patel, Advs. for R-1.
Mr. Vikash Singh and Mr. Ujjwal Chaudhary, Advs. for IOA.
Mr. Ankur Chhibber, Adv. for Col. Jaiveer Singh.
Mr. Ishan Roy Chowdhury, Adv. for observer.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SACHIN DATTA

ORDER

13.08.2025

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CM APPL.49192/2025 (seeking suspension / setting aside of the extra-ordinary general meeting notice)

1. The present application has been filed by the petitioner seeking suspension / setting aside of the Extra-Ordinary General Meeting ('EOGM') Notice bearing no.072/EFI/EOGA/2025 dated 02.08.2025 issued by the respondent no.1 [Equestrian Federation of India ('EFI')] thereby purporting to call an EOGM on 17.08.2025 at 11:30 hours at DSOI, Dhaula Kuan, New Delhi-110010.
2. It is vehemently submitted by the learned senior counsel for the applicant that the said EOGM is being held with the ulterior motive of disrupting the functioning of the EFI and without following the mandatory pre-requisites for calling an EOGM.
3. The present writ petition has a chequered history which has been set out in the application.
4. *Vide* order dated 29.05.2024 passed by the Division Bench of this Court in LPA 449/2024 (arising out of the present proceedings), it was directed as under:-

"5. Accordingly, the Executive Committee constituted pursuant to EFI elections held in November, 2019, and as it existed on 18th December, 2019, is reinstated with the modification that Lt. Col. Ashish Malik and Maj. Ritika Dahiya are co-opted in place of Ms. Vanita Malhotra and Lt. Col. Raj Sangram Singh respectively. And, the impugned order dated 21st May, 2024 is suspended till the learned Single Judge disposes of the writ petitions being W.P.(C) 10342/2019 and W.P.(C) 5989/2022. This Court once again clarifies that the aforesaid interim arrangement has been made in view of the impending Paris Olympics, 2024.

6. Since the matter has been pending before the learned Single Judge for some time and the matter requires expeditious disposal, the Registry is directed to list the aforesaid two writ petitions alongwith W.P.(C) 10783/2022 and W.P.(C) 2036/2022 before Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjeev



Narula. For this purpose, list the matter before Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjeev Narula on 2nd July, 2024. This Court clarifies that the rights and contentions of all the parties are left open. With the aforesaid directions, the present appeals and applications are disposed of."

5. It is submitted that since the then elected President, Lt. Gen Gopal R. indicated his inability to continue as the President of the EFI, the Executive Committee (EC) unanimously appointed Col. Jagat Singh [Vice President (Tech)] as the Interim-President using its powers under Clause 11 of Article 013 of the EFI Statute.

6. *Vide* judgment dated 07.01.2025 passed in W.P.(C) 5989/2022 passed by a Co-ordinate Bench of this Court, the legality and validity of certain exemptions granted to the respondent no.1 (exempting applicability of certain provisions of the Sports Code) was pronounced upon. It was held as under:-

"47. The MYAS has failed to record any substantive rationale for granting the exemptions in the impugned order. Its justification that the peculiarities of Equestrian sports necessitate the exemptions is based on generalized observations rather than empirical evidence. In the impugned order, Respondent No. 1 has merely noted the lack of infrastructure, expertise, and horses but has not explained why these factors render compliance with the Sports Code impractical or riddled with practical difficulty for its implementation. Furthermore, there is no evidence placed on record to suggest that Respondent No. 1 undertook any fact-finding exercise to verify the averments of EFI before they granted the impugned exemptions. As is clear from the documents placed on record and the report of the Observer in W.P.(C) 10342 of 2019, there are glaring discrepancies in the membership of State associations over club associations in the EFI, which is an aspect which ought to have been carefully studied before the exemptions were granted under the impugned order.

48 The Court notes that even under the current exemptions, the broader objectives of the Sports Code, i.e., representation, inclusivity, and grassroots development—remain unmet. The exemptions have merely institutionalized an unequal system where clubs dominate governance, sidelining State and District associations. Thus, in absence of a detailed fact-finding exercise before the exemptions were granted,



the decision appears to have been a mere endorsement of EFI's request, without independently verifying the actual state of facilities or participation. In light of the foregoing discussion, the Court holds that the exemptions granted to EFI under the impugned order are arbitrary and lack substantive factual foundation.

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50. At the same time, the Court recognizes the limited percolation and participation in Equestrian sports. However, the data furnished by EFI lacks sufficient depth and does not demonstrate any concrete or sustained efforts to promote the sport or expand its reach. Furthermore, the submissions of the Petitioner and the report of the Observer in W.P.(C) 10342 of 2019 indicate a significant reduction in the membership of State Associations, alongside an increase in the membership of individual clubs within EFI. The exemptions have allowed EFI to remain in non-compliance with the requirement of having membership from 2/3rd of the States and to permit clubs as voting members of the national federation, while also granting relaxations from compliance with the Model Election Guidelines of the Code. The exemptions, rather than addressing governance challenges, have perpetuated a structure that does not align with the principles of transparency, accountability, and representation mandated by the Sports Code.

51. The continuation of the exemptions cannot be permitted indefinitely without addressing the systemic deficiencies identified in this judgment. However, the Court recognizes that an abrupt cessation of the exemptions, without a clear roadmap for reform, risks creating a governance vacuum, detrimental to the sport and its athletes. To balance these concerns, the Court directs that the exemptions remain operational as a strictly interim measure, pending the completion of the fact-finding exercise and the implementation of concrete steps to bring EFI into compliance with the principles of the Sports Code. Any further decision regarding the extension, modification, or withdrawal of the exemptions shall be based on the findings of the Committee.”

7. Further, vide the aforesaid judgment dated 07.01.2025, this Court appointed a Committee headed by Hon'ble Mr. Justice (Retd.) Najmi Waziri to give a report with regard to the following points:-

“a) Assessment of Infrastructure: Identify and evaluate the facilities available for Equestrian sports, including their geographic distribution and accessibility. Specifically, the Committee shall determine:

i. The availability of Equestrian infrastructure in each district and State.



ii. Ownership, maintenance, and accessibility of facilities provided by government bodies, SAI, EFI, State associations, or private clubs.

iii. The feasibility of athletes from districts lacking infrastructure, utilizing the facilities available in adjoining districts or regions.

b) Participation and Representation: Examine the level of athlete participation and representation, including:

i. The number and distribution of registered equestrian athletes across Districts and States.

ii. The role of clubs, State associations, and District associations in promoting grassroots participation.

iii. The extent to which State and District associations fulfil their mandate under the Sports Code.

c) Functionality of State Associations: Assess the effectiveness and contributions of State Associations in the development of Equestrian sports and their compliance with the Sports Code.

d) Role of Clubs: Evaluate the contributions of clubs to the governance, infrastructure, and development of Equestrian sports and their compatibility with the representative framework of the Sports Code.”

8. It is also brought out during the course of hearing that in the aftermath of the order dated 29.05.2024 passed in LPA 449/2024, a suspension order dated 11.04.2025 was issued to Col. Jaiveer Singh by the EC.

9. *Vide* the said order, it was recorded that the Executive Committee of the EFI has resolved to suspend the former from the office of Secretary General with immediate effect.

10. It further transpires that the Executive Committee approached the concerned Division Bench in LPA 449/2024 to inform the Court and seek formal approval of the said decision, however, it is submitted that the Division Bench left the issue open, granting liberty to the petitioner to pursue other legal remedies available in law.

11. There is a controversy as to whether Col. Jaiveer Singh continues as



Secretary General of the EFI or not.

12. It is submitted that the notice for convening the EOGM has been issued without following the mandatory procedure set out in Article 012 of the EFI Statute. It is further submitted that the decision to convene an EOGM was not even placed before the Executive Committee of the EFI.

13. In the circumstances, it is sought that the impugned notice dated 02.08.2025 issued by Col. Jaiveer Singh (retired) purporting to convene an EOGM on 17.08.2025 be set aside.

14. Mr. Pragyan Pradip Sharma, learned senior counsel for the EFI supports the present application. He submits that the decision/ notice purporting to convene the EOGM has been issued without following the mandatory procedure set out in the EFI Statute and without the same being considered by the Executive Committee, which is a mandatory requirement.

15. It is further submitted that letters have been received from various members, complaining that the notice regarding the EOGM has not been issued to them. It is submitted that the same amounts to infraction of right of the members as set out in Article 007 of the Constitution of the EFI.

16. Mr. Ankur Chhibber, learned counsel appearing for Col. Jaiveer Singh seeks to justify the impugned notice.

17. During the course of hearing, he has handed over a compilation purporting to be the copies of requisitions received by the Secretary General seeking that an EOGM be convened. It is submitted that the Secretary General convened the EOGM after receiving more than the requisite number of requisitions, in terms of the relevant provision in the EFI Statute.

18. Mr. Amit Sibal, learned senior counsel appearing for the Chandigarh Horse Riders Society (applicant in CM APPL. 48967/2025) vehemently



opposes the present application. He emphasizes that once the requisite number of requisitions have been received, it is incumbent to hold an EOGM. Further, now that the notice for holding the EOGM has been issued, the process cannot be interdicted with at this stage and the EOGM is mandatorily required to be convened.

19. Having considered the rival contentions, on a *prima facie* conspectus, this Court finds merit in the contentions raised on behalf of the petitioner/applicant.

20. It is evident that:

- (i) there are serious disputes about virtually every facet of the functioning and current state of affairs of the EFI;
- (ii) Paragraph 47 of the judgment dated 07.01.2025 passed in W.P.(C) 5989/2022 records that “*there are glaring discrepancies in the membership of State associations over club associations in the EFI*”. The Fact-Finding Committee appointed *vide* the said judgment is seized of the task entrusted to it.
- (iii) While the said exercise by the Fact- Finding Committee is underway and while this Court is seized of the issues which are subject-matter of the present petition, there appears no rationale in seeking to further confound the uneasy state of affairs in EFI by convening an EOGM; the EFI is not only faction-ridden, there are also discrepancies as regards membership (as noticed in the aforementioned judgement dated 07.01.2025);
- (iv) a perusal of the requisitions handed over by Mr. Ankur Chhibber, learned counsel for the Col. Jaiveer Singh, reveals that the same have been addressed to Dr. S. Y. Quraishi, learned Observer, appointed



vide order dated 15.11.2019 passed by this Court. Learned counsel for the Observer accedes that no proactive steps were taken by the Observer for the purpose of convening of the EOGM. Instead, Col. Jaiveer Singh, to whom the requisitions were copied, decided to convene the EOGM on his own. It is also admitted that the decision to convene the EOGM was not placed before the Executive Committee of the EFI. There is *prima facie* merit in the contention that in terms of Article 012, it is incumbent that holding of an EOGM is an aspect that must be considered/ placed before the Executive Committee by the Secretary General. The relevant stipulation in Article 012 is as under:-

“ARTICLE 012- EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2. The Executive Committee may whenever they think fit, and or upon requisition made by 50 members of the EFI, an Extra-Ordinary General Assembly can be convened. A meeting convened by requisition shall be fixed for a date not later than 21 days from the date of requisition. The requisition shall specify the objective of the meeting and only business specified shall be discussed at the meeting. The request for the meeting shall be made to the Secretary General of the EFI who shall call the meeting. The right to call the meeting shall not vest with the individual and life members.”

(v) Further Article 012 also provides as under:-

“3. The conduct of the Extra-Ordinary General Assembly Meeting will be exactly like the Ordinary General Assembly Meeting but quorum has to be minimum of 50 members excluding Executive Committee members.”

With regard to a General Assembly Meeting, Article 011 provides as under:-

“ARTICLE 011- ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2. General Assembly Meeting will be held after giving a minimum notice of thirty days in writing specifying the date, place and hour of the meeting and the agenda of the meeting. Such information will also be dispatched under postal certificate to all members.”



In the present case, there appears to have been an omission in giving the mandatory notice period of thirty (30) days as referred to in the aforesaid provision.

(vi) Learned senior counsel for the Federation has said that a large number of members have not received any notice whatsoever as regards convening of an EOGM.

21. Considering the aforesaid circumstances, at this stage, on a *prima facie* conspectus, the impugned notice bearing No.072/EFI/EOGA/2025 dated 02.08.2025 purported to convene the EOGM on 17.08.2025 is stayed.

22. The concerned respondents are restrained from holding an EOGM on 17.08.2025.

23. Further directions as regards the holding of the EOGM, and the timing and procedural compliances with regard thereto, shall be given after considering the substantive issues that arise for consideration in the main writ petition and other pending applications.

24. List alongwith W.P.(C) 10342/2019 and all other pending applications for further hearing, on 13.10.2025.

SACHIN DATTA, J

AUGUST 13, 2025/r