



# ATHLETICS FEDERATION OF INDIA

## FEBRUARY 2021

# NEWSLETTER

### OUR PLAN IS TO USE GRAND PRIX MEETS TO PREPARE FOR FEDERATION CUP: COACH GALINA BUKHARINA



Athletes in Men's 200m in action at IGP 2021

The Athletics Federation of India and its State units have worked overtime to ensure the successful conduct of several meets at the State, Zonal and National levels. It was a surreal feeling when the AFI Federation Cup Junior U20 Athletics Championships was completed in Bhopal and the National Junior Athletics Championships was held in Guwahati.

Yet, some eyebrows were raised when quarter-milers like Muhammad Anas Yahiya, Arokia Rajiv and MR Poovamma ran the shorter sprints while Amoj Jacob competed in 800m in the first two Indian Grand Prix meets at the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports in Patiala on February 18 and 25. We let renowned coach Galina Bukharina share her thoughts on the thinking.

"It is a part of our plan to have them run sprints or middle-distance events ahead of the main competition, which is the Federation Cup (March 15 to 19). These are the steps up to a 400m race. We have to see these meets as stepping-stones for the main event, which will be the Federation Cup. The Indian Grands Prix meets allow our athletes to get into competition shape," she says.

"We are working with the athletes to get better results but you must understand that these are stages through which all athletes have to pass. In Europe, where we were based last year, and the United States there are so many competitions at different levels, allowing athletes to compete over different distances in preparation for the main event," coach Galina Bukharina says.

"We have planned for Arokia, Anas and Amoj to compete with one another in the Federation Cup, which is a selection meet for the rest of the season. I believe that it will be a very good race and we can expect pretty good results. We are monitoring the slight injury to Noah (Nirmal Tom) in

the Grand Prix I and will make a decision about his running in the Federation Cup later," she says.

The coach, acknowledged by many as being among the finest, points out that there are two different groups of athletes among the quarter-milers. "Some have more sprint in them, more speed in them. They go into high performance event for 400m with pretty high level of sprint training behind them. If they keep improving their sprint results, it will eventually reflect in the 400m results. There are others like Amoj who train in middle-distance," she says.

"Each of them has an individual training for the 400m. All cannot have the same speed workouts since their muscles are different. Those with middle-distance experience need long workouts that help them improve their strengths," says the coach, who has guided the Indian team for some years now.

"If, for example, a runner's speed is 11.5 meters per second, we can help him get to 11 meters per second over a longer period of time. He cannot do

10.5 meters per second. We have to have speed practice also, but we have to cater to his strengths - carrying speed longer than sprint. You have to make individual programmes for each runner depending on individual strengths," she says.

Galina Bukharina points out that it is important to be sensitive to the fact that the athletes are returning to competition after 18 months. Besides, she says, it is also very hard to run in a competition when the athletes are competing against others who they have trained together with for 24 months in-a-row.

"Of course, international competitions are totally different as the athletes can motivate themselves as they are up against different rivals and in different conditions. Right now, we cannot say that the meets they are taking part in will give them high motivation," she says.

The coach says if a runner has lost weight in two competitions spread over a week, it would make sense to give the athlete time to recover rather than put the runner through another meet a week later. "It would also be better to draw up a training and competition calendar for such athletes with an eye on the more



Coach Galina Bukharina

(Photo Courtesy- Indian Express)

important meet that is coming up," she says.

The good thing is that the athletes in the National Camp have bought into such thinking and are working hard with Galina Bukharina and the support staff to ensure that India presents a strong challenge in the Olympic Games relay races in Tokyo. She is confident that the men and women's teams will qualify for the Games. The mixed relay team has already made the grade.





## ATHLETES MAKE MOST OF AFI'S CAREFUL PLANNING WITH WORTHY PERFORMANCES IN IGP MEETS

The resumption of athletics competitions in the country in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic was never going to be a cakewalk but with careful planning and a strict Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), Athletics Federation of India and its State units have pulled off a number of meets without incident. The conduct of such meets has drawn praise from all quarters.



After set the ball rolling with the Federation Cup Juniors U20 Athletics Championships in Bhopal in January, AFI went full steam ahead with the National Junior Athletics Championships in Guwahati, the National Race Walking Championships in Ranchi, the National Cross Country Championships near Chandigarh and two Indian Grand Prix meets in Patiala.



Chandigarh Athletics Association hosted one of the best National Cross Country Championships in 2021

While the earlier meets were stand-alone competitions, the Grand Prix meets on February 18 and 25 (as also the third one on March 5) were planned as preparatory events for the Federation Cup in the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports in Patiala from March 15. Many athletes embraced that idea while some chose to make their presence felt straightaway with good performances.





**Amoj Jacob**  
(PB: 46.00s in Men's 400m at IGP-2)

Amoj Jacob (Delhi) came up with a personal best time of 46.00 seconds to win the men's 400m in the Indian Grand Prix II. He improved on the 46.26 he clocked in June 2017

Two of his relay squad team-mates, Arokia Rajiv (Tamil Nadu) and Muhammed Anas Yahiya (Kerala), were locked in a fascinating contest over the 200m sprint – part of their overall preparations. Arokia Rajiv defeated Anas, who holds the National Record, by 0.20 seconds, with a time of 21.24 seconds.

Kerala's M Sreeshankar, competing in his first national-level Long Jump competition since October 2019, produced a best leap of 8.05m on his sixth try. He would have been pleased with his rhythm that fetched him jumps between 7.75m and 7.87m and egged by that, he went over the 8m mark to have a promising start to the season.

In the men's Shot Put, Tajinderpal Singh's opening effort of 19.49m was good for gold but he would have expected to throw farther in his subsequent tries. Each of his two foul throws was followed by 19.31m and 19.33m while the 18.95m put on his fourth try would have disappointed him the most.

Javelin Thrower Annu Rani (Uttar Pradesh), seeking Olympic qualifying mark of 64.00m, wound herself up and delivered a 61.22m throw with her opening effort. She followed that up with two throws over the 60m mark. She will draw much confidence from her showing here and will look to qualify for to the Tokyo Olympics rather than bank on her ranking as World No. 12.

Sprinter Dutee Chand blazed the track to win the women's 100m in 11.44 seconds, an improvement on the 11.51 seconds she clocked the previous week. She is hoping to qualify for the Olympic Games by meeting the 11.15 seconds standard but will also keep an eye on conforming a place among the 56 starters in Tokyo on the basis of her ranking as World No. 33 at the moment.

In the 200m, Hima Das (Assam) made light of the absence of much competition to win in 23.31 seconds. She has run faster only three times, twice in 2018 when she had times of 23.10 In the National Inter-State Athletics Championships in Guwahati and 23.22 in Gliwic Grand Prix in Poland and once in 2019 when she clocked 23.25 in Velká cena Tábora in Tabor, Czech Republic.

A number of personal bests was evidence of the shape that the athletes have kept themselves in, mindful of the fact that in the Olympic year they would use such a meet as part of their preparation for the task ahead.

Kerala's Muhammad Anas Yahiya, the leading 400m runner in the country, took part in the 100m and finished a creditable second in 10.70 seconds, two-hundredths of a second behind Krishnakumar Satish Rane (Maharashtra). Amiya Kumar Mallick (Odisha) won the slower B Race in 10.89 seconds to take the third place overall.

S Arokia Rajiv (Tamil Nadu) showed a good turn of speed in the men's 200m, winning the B race in 21.40 seconds to edge out Shashank Shinde (Chhattisgarh) as the fastest over the distance on Thursday. Shashank Shinde has stopped the clock at 22.21 seconds in the A race after Noah Nirmal Tom (Kerala) pulled up injured inside the first 25m.



**Javelin Thrower Annu Rani in action at IGP 2021**

In the women's 200m, Anjali Devi (Haryana) ran out a comfortable winner against sprinter Kaveri Laxmana Gouda Patil (Karnataka) and fellow quarter-mile specialist Subha Venkatesan (Tamil Nadu). While Anjali's time of 23.57 seconds was a shade below her best of 23.44 seconds, Kaveri Patil (24.45) and Subha Venkatesan (24.59) produces personal bests.

MR Poovamma (Karnataka) did well to beat fellow National camper Kiran Pahal (Haryana) by more than a second in the women's 400m. The coaching staff could be pleased with 30-year-old Poovamma's time. For, through the year 2019, she had only four faster races than the 53.45 seconds she clocked in Indian Grand Prix I.

Ayyasamy Dharun, who has a personal best of 48.80 seconds in the 400m Hurdles, warmed up for the season ahead with a victory in 51.33 seconds. He held back a challenge from Uttar Pradesh's Aftab Alam, winning by a mere three-hundredths of a second. He did not strain himself and cruised to victory.



## RECOVERY AFTER ACUTE INJURIES

(By: Andrei Filimonau, Recovery Expert: Athletics Federation of India)

For any high-performance athlete, the rate and quality of recovery are very important. Optimal recovery may provide numerous benefits during repetitive high-level training and competition. Inevitably, different interventions have varied effects on fatigue, muscle injury, recovery and performance.

Proper recovery has been shown to result in the restoration of physiological and psychological processes, so that the athlete can train or compete again. Recovery after training and competition is complex and dependent on the nature of the exercise performed and other outside and inside stressors.



**P: PROTECTION** means all actions used to prevent further injury. For example, an injured leg or foot may be protected by limiting or avoiding weight-bearing through the use of crutches or a cane. Partially immobilising the injured area by using a sling, splint, or brace may also be a means of protection.

**R: REST** is mandatory to allow healing. A person should avoid activities that can stress the injured area to the point of pain or that may slow or prevent healing. Some movement, however, is beneficial. Isometric muscle contractions can improve and maintain strength and function. For example, a patient with a leg injury can repeatedly flex and relax the calf and thigh muscles while sitting still or lying down; the leg muscles "fire" and are exercised even though the leg itself does not move or bear weight. But any rehab activity has to be recommended and maintained by medical staff only.

**I: ICE** refers to the use of cold treatments, also known as cryotherapy, to treat acute injuries. Ice is recommended with the intent to minimize and reduce swelling as well as to decrease pain. The most common and most convenient is a simple plastic bag of crushed ice placed over a wet paper towel on the affected area. Adding of water to crushed ice optimises the contact with skin for cooling. It is important to protect the skin and limit the cold exposure to 10 to 15 minutes. Cycles of 10 to 15 minutes ON and 1 to 2 hours OFF are generally agreed upon as effective and safer than longer periods of continuous ice application.

If skin becomes mottled, red and raised where the ice contacted the skin the ice treatments should be discontinued. Redness alone, however, is common and should resolve after a few minutes of re-warming.

**C: COMPRESSION** is the use of a compression wrap, such as an elastic bandage, to apply an external force to the injured tissue. This compression minimises swelling and provides mild support.

An elastic bandage should be applied directly to the skin by starting a few inches below the injury and wrapping in a figure eight or spiraling manner to a few inches above the injured area. A medium amount of tension should be applied to provide ample, but not too constrictive compression. The bandage should not cause numbness, tingling, or color change of the soft tissue. Loosening the bandage should quickly alleviate these changes. It is best to remove or significantly loosen the elastic bandage when sleeping and to re-apply it when awake.

**E: ELEVATION** is recommended to help reduce the accumulation of fluid in the injured extremity or joint. Controlling swelling can help decrease pain and may limit the loss of range of motion, possibly speeding up recovery time.

Elevation is accomplished by positioning the injured area above the level of the heart. Elevation during most of the waking hours, if possible, and positioning the injured limb on extra pillows for sleep is probably most effective in the initial 24 to 48 hours. If there is significant swelling which continues after 24 to 48 hours, or if swelling recurs during recovery, then continued periodic elevation is appropriate.

Athletes in need of pain relief can use over-the-counter creams, patches, acetaminophen, or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as naproxen or ibuprofen.

**Some treatments can cause more harm than good. Here is a list of things that can aggravate an acute injury:**

- Hot water exposure or heat treatments to the injured area;
- Stretching, movements, or weight bearing activity that is painful;
- Aggressive, deep massage;
- Ice or commercial cold packs placed directly on the skin;
- Advice contrary to common sense or widely accepted principles of basic injury care;

Many sport and exercise injuries do not require an emergent office or hospital evaluation. Nevertheless, in order to have the most accurate diagnosis and best recommendations for an expedient and safe return to your activity, seeking a consultation from a well trained, experienced sports medicine physician is recommended.

Athletic performance is affected by numerous aspects and therefore, recovery interventions after injury or illness and adherence to recovery protocols should also be taken into consideration along with Practice and games; Nutrition and hydration; Sleep; Physiological and psychological individual characteristics and genetics; Recovery interventions after training and events; Environmental conditions; Travel; Employment and/or school and Social life.

Acute injuries vary greatly in presentation, severity and recovery time. An acute injury results in damage to soft tissues, including skin, fascia, cartilage, muscle, tendon, and/or ligament tissue. Damage to bones or nerves can also accompany these injuries. A damage can be accompanied by localised pain, swelling, redness or bruising, limited range of motion, decreased function.

Athletes with mild to moderate injuries can, shortly after the occurrence of the injury, use the PRICE protocol during the first 24 to 72 hours to alleviate symptoms.

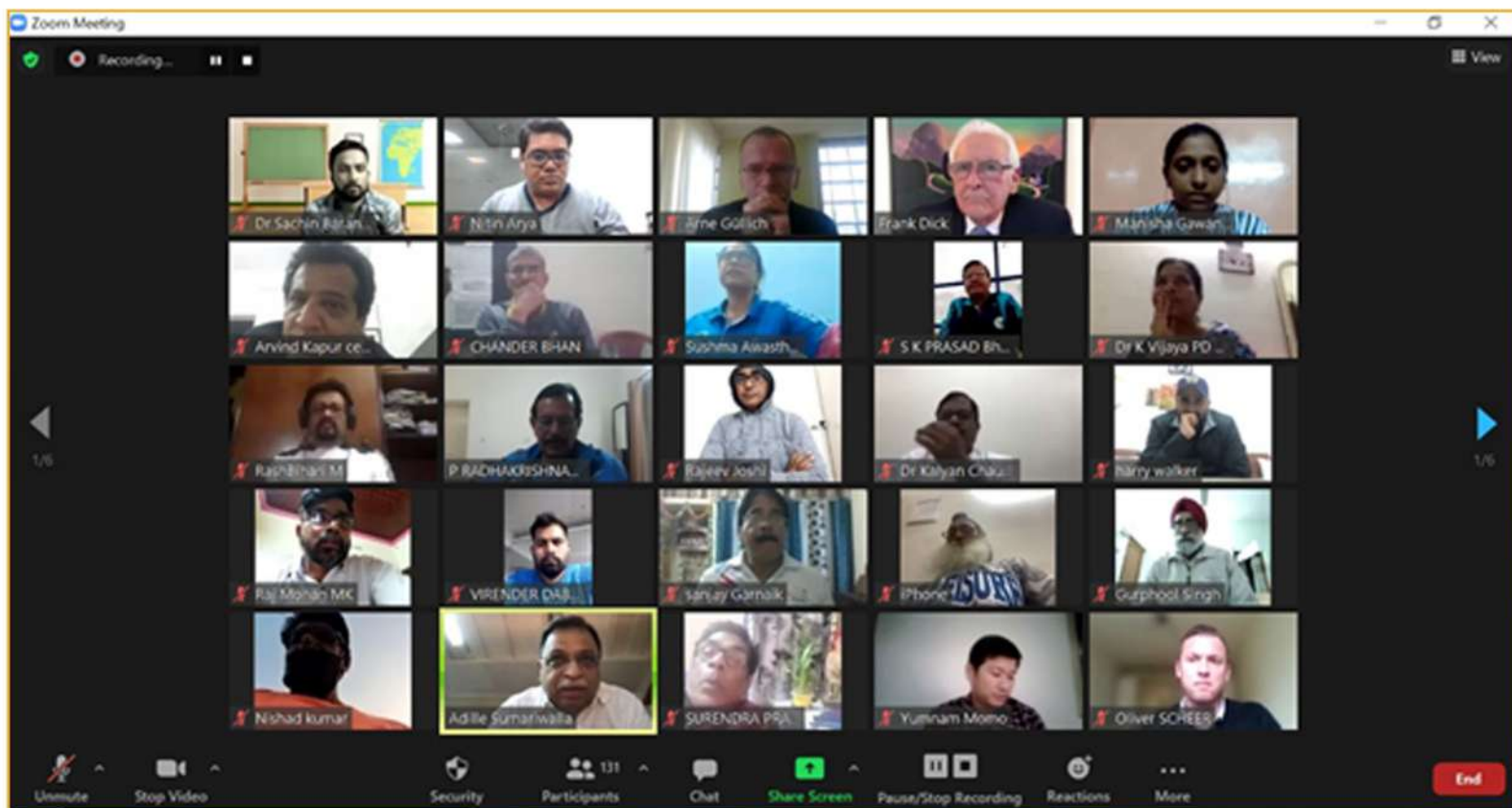


Andrei Filimonau



## AFI ROPES IN AMAZING FACULTY TO EDUCATE COACHES ON MODERN TALENT IDENTIFICATION METHODS

New Delhi, February 16: Athletics Federation of India has embarked on an ambitious journey to enhance talent identification methods in the country by organising a four-day seminar titled The ways to search right talent for the World Level 1 and Level 2 Coaches in India and the talent identification teams of the AFI and Sports Authority of India.



AFI roped in a wide-ranging faculty with rich experience, including former Director of Coaching UK Athletics Frank Dick, Prof. Arne Gullich, Head of Department of Sports Science, Kaiserslautern University of Technology, Germany, sports data and coaching consultant Kevin Ankrom (USA) as well as Oliver Scheer, Senior Consultant Kids Athletics World Athletics.



**(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT- MR. FRANK DICK, MR. ARNE GULLICH, MR. JONATHAN BOASE, MR. OLIVER SCHEER)**

Besides the faculty includes World Athletics Club Director of Education Gunter Lange and Jonathan Boase who is Chief Executive of the Loughborough University, London. The six of them have held 17 sessions for the Indian coaches where they shared methods to identify athletes whose talent can be groomed to compete at the World level.

AFI President Adille J. Sumariwalla said the seminar was in keeping with the Federations desire to ensure that there was modern and uniform talent identification and long-term athlete development systems in the country. "We want all our coaches to embrace contemporary methods to ensure that the country's vast talent pool in athletics is tapped at the right time," he said.

The seminar is another step in the direction of making India a more focused athletics nation. In the past year, AFI has increased its efforts to enhance Coach Education with the aim of having a World Athletics Level 1 coach in every district in the country. It has also conducted workshops for technical officials and presentation officials to ensure quality conduct of all meets under its aegis.



## YAMANISHI CRUISES TO 1:17:20 VICTORY AT JAPANESE 20KM RACE WALKING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The sun shone for Toshikazu Yamanishi at the 104th Japanese Championships in Kobe.

The world champion lived up to his gold coloured No 1 race number to take the 20km race by the scruff of the neck just after 15km, and ring it dry long before the end.

Yamanishi's second successive win was even more comfortable than last year's emphatic victory.



His winning time of 1:17:20 was better by 16 seconds than 2020, and six seconds inside the championship record. It's also the sixth-fastest performance in history.

After he broke the tape, he was giving an interview before second-place finisher Eiki Takahashi came into view 44 seconds later.

All the same, the latter has finished in the top three since 2014, and won five times before Yamanishi killed the run last year.

A tired Koki Ikeda finished third, and as he sprawled on the tarmac an official still put a lanyard with 'number three' around his neck.

In contrast, the winner looked like he had been out for the Sunday papers before taking a bow and strolling off into the sunshine.

Yamanishi celebrated his 25th birthday last Monday as well as 100 straight weeks at the top of world rankings for the 20km race walk.

If proof were needed difficult training conditions over the past year has had little effect on Japanese race walking, this was it.

All three underlined their Olympic selection at the distance, and right from the gun the main places were quickly sorted.

(From [www.worldathletics.org](http://www.worldathletics.org))



## INTERNATIONAL ULTRA RUNNER LL MEENA PASSES AWAY

Lallu Lal Meena passed away on February 10th, 2021 just 10 days after his 39th birthday. He had represented the Indian Ultra Running Team at two International Ultrarunning Championships (100 km World Championship in Croatia and 24H Continental Championship in Taipei). At the 2018 IAU 100 K World Championships held at Croatia in September, he clocked 9 hours 17 minutes 20 seconds.



While his first race was a 12 K cross country, his first ultra event was part of his training which was a distance of 60 km, half trail and half road. It was after this run he started participating in ultra races organized around the country since 2016.

Adille J Sumariwalla, AFI President said, "The Indian Ultra running community is shocked and saddened by the untimely demise of star runner Lallu Meena who was part of the team at the World 100 k in 2018 and the bronze medal winning 24 Hour team at the Asia & Oceania championship in 2018. He will be remembered as a fine and gentle human being who was always there to help, support and cheer other runners."



# QUIZ TIME

1. What will be the final event of the athletics schedule in the Tokyo Olympic Games?
2. Which 31-year-old was the winner of the men's 100m in the first two Indian Grand Prix meets in Patiala in on February 18 (10.68 seconds) and on February 25 (10.71 seconds)?
3. Which event in February 2021 saw as many as 1637 boys and girls register to compete in and make it the country's single largest sporting event since the outbreak of Covid-19?
4. Who won the men and women's 10km races in the SBI 55th National Cross Country Championships 2021 on the picturesque but challenging course in the ATF Golf Meadows in Dera Bassi?
5. With which recent Athletics Federation of India initiative were Frank Dick, Prof. Arne Gullich and Kevin Ankrom involved in?
6. When and Where will the World Athletics Challenge – Race Walking be held this year?
7. Blanka Vlasic, a two-time world high jump champion, 2016 Olympic bronze medalist and the second-highest jumper of all-time, announced her retirement in February. Which country does she hail from?
8. Which two athletes got to the second spots on the World Athletics Toplists for Outdoor events in 2021 with good performances in the Indian Grand Prix II in Patiala on February 25?
9. Which official's final aim of work is to create an informative, entertaining, lively and attractive production of the show that is to be offered to the spectators?
10. What must prevail in the rare event of a conflict between safety and the Rules of competition?

\*Send your replies to [communications@indianathletics.in](mailto:communications@indianathletics.in) by 15th February 2021. Winners with all correct answers will receive an Exclusive AFI T-shirt

\*Winners of January 2021 Quiz- Bala Subramanyam, M. Narayana Rao, Dr. S.Saraboji

