

FROM THE DESK OF

JUSTICE R.K. GAUBA

SENIOR ADVOCATE

FORMERLY:

JUDGE, HIGH COURT OF DELHI

JUDICIAL MEMBER, APPELLATE TRIBUNAL FOR ELECTRICITY

D-66 (Second Floor), Panchsheel Enclave,

New Delhi-110 017 (India)

+91-9650411919

+91-11-42780066 / 42760066

justicegauba@gmail.com

BOXING FEDERATION OF INDIA (BFI) – ELECTIONS FOR THE TENURE 2025-29

Returning Officer's Order dated 21.03.2025

1. The process for Elections of the "Office bearers and other Member of Executive Council" of the *Boxing Federation of India* ("BFI") for the tenure of 2025-29 was set in motion on 04.03.2025 by the incumbent President issuing a Notice convening Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held on 28.03.2025, one of the agenda items to come up in such AGM being the said Elections. By a circular issued on 07.03.2025, the President BFI had, *inter alia*, "clarified that only Bonafide and duly elected members during the election AGM (duly notified to BFI) of the State Units affiliated with the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) shall be authorised to represent their respective States/Union Territories".
2. In terms of the Rules and Regulations (R&Rs) of BFI read with the Model Election Code as stipulated and specified in the National Sports Code which govern these elections, the undersigned was appointed as the Returning Officer ("RO") by the President of BFI through a communication dated 07.03.2025. The *Electoral College List* prepared by the President was made over to the undersigned on 12.03.2025. Noticeably, the said list had excluded, amongst others, the name of Mr. Anurag Singh Thakur, one of the two nominations sent by the *Himachal Pradesh Boxing Association* ("HPBA").
3. By a detailed Order passed by the undersigned on 13.03.2025 after hearing, *inter alia*, on a representation in relation to *Delhi Amateur Boxing Association* ("DABA"), it was concluded that the two nominations sent by the President of DABA were "invalid", Mr. Rohit Jainendra Jain being "admittedly an appointee" and Mr. Neeraj Kant Bhatt not "a validly elected general secretary", the procedure of Election bye-laws having been "not followed nor any nominee from BFI or Olympic association invited", since the "whole procedure followed for AGM held on 24.11.2024 was flawed in teeth of the R&Rs".
4. The Schedule for these Elections was notified on 12.03.2025 and in its terms the nominations received during specified period (14.03.2025 to 6 PM on 16.03.2025) were subjected to scrutiny on 18.03.2025 and, thereafter, the List of Valid Nominations was published on 19.03.2025. In terms of the said notified Schedule, the Final List of Candidates contesting the elections is to be published on 22.03.2025, after the stage of withdrawal of nominations (from 19.03.2025 to 5 PM on 21.03.2025).
5. The undersigned is in receipt of emails dated 20.03.2025 from President DABA and President of HPBA, respectively sharing copies of the Order dated 19.03.2025 passed by Hon'ble High Court of Delhi on CM Application 15866/2025 in WP(C) 3361/2025 of DABA against BFI and Union of India (UOI) and of Order dated 20.03.2025 passed by Hon'ble High Court of Himachal Pradesh on CWP no. 3714 of 2025 and CMP no. 4178 of 2025 taken out by HPBA and another against UOI and BFI and its incumbent President. The President HPBA has sent as attachment to his above-said email copy of a representation, which is also received by post.

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6. By order dated 19.03.2025, the Delhi High Court, whilst adjourning the matter to 18.08.2025, has directed as under:

"43. Accordingly, the operation of the Circular dated 07th March, 2025, issued by the respondent no. 1, i.e. BFI, is stayed till next date of hearing.

44. Accordingly, it is directed subject to the outcome of the present writ petition, the petitioners shall be allowed to participate in the election process being carried out by the respondent no. 1, i.e., BFI.

45. It is clarified that election process shall be continued by the respondent no. 1, i.e., BFI, however, taking into account the fact that operation of notice dated 07th March, 2025, has been stayed by this Court till the next date of hearing.

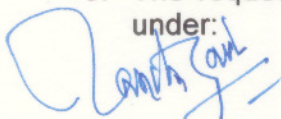
46. Pursuant to the culmination of the election process, result shall also be declared, which shall be subject to the outcome of the present writ petition".

7. By Order dated 20.03.2025, the Himachal Pradesh High Court has directed as under:

"56. Accordingly, as an ad-interim measure, this Court stays the operation of Notice, dated 07.03.2025, as well as rejection of nomination of one of the two nominated members by the petitioner No. 1, namely, Mr. Anurag Singh Thakur and directs respondent No. 3-Federation to treat the nomination of Mr. Anurag Singh Thakur along with the nomination of Mr. Rajesh Bhandari to be a valid nomination for the Electoral College by petitioner No. 1 and proceed with the election process in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of respondent No. 3. The operation of Annexure P-10, i.e. list of Electoral College as well as Annexure P-14, dated 13.03.2025, i.e. final list of Electoral College to the extent they declare the names of one of the nominees of petitioner No. 1 to be ineligible is also stayed as an ad-interim measure. It is further directed that respondents shall extend the last date of submission of nomination, to enable Mr. Anurag Singh Thakur to file his nomination and he be permitted to represent the petitioner-Association in the Annual general Meeting and fully participate therein, as per the Memorandum of respondent No. 3, including but not limited to the contest for any post for Boxing federation of India. It goes without saying that the conduct of elections shall be as per Electoral Roll, in terms whereof, both the nominees of petitioner No. 1 were found eligible to be a part of the Electoral College. It also goes without saying that the election process will be subject to the final outcome of this writ petition or any other order that may be passed by the Court in this application."

8. The request by email dated 20.03.2025 from DABA is that "... a fresh electoral college is to be issued in consonance with the order for the Hon'ble Court dated 19.03.2025, allowing the representatives of the Delhi Amateur Boxing Association to participate in the said election process at the earliest so as to expedite the election process ...".

9. The requests made by the representation dated 20.03.2025 from HPBA are as under:



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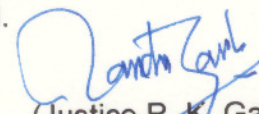
"1. Treat the nomination of HPBA's representatives, as authorized vide Letter dated 10.03.2025 (Ref No. HPABA/07/25), as valid and duly incorporated in the Electoral College Roll.

2. Take immediate steps to amend the Electoral College Roll to reflect this inclusion.

3. Extend the nomination deadline, to fully implement the Hon'ble Court's directions."

10. Further, Mr. Aneesh Raghuraj Deshpande, Advocate by his email of even date has informed that Mr. Rakesh Ishwarlal Tiwari has filed a Writ petition (lodging no. 10284 of 2025) before High Court of Judicature at Bombay, impleading the undersigned as Respondent no. 3, the other Respondents being UOI and BFI praying, *inter alia*, the stay against these elections, his grievances seemingly relating to representation of the State of Maharashtra.
11. By his emails sent today, in response to the above-mentioned emails from DABA and HPBA, the President of BFI has communicated to the undersigned that "(s)ince these orders have the potential to disrupt the ongoing electoral process/schedule, we are taking steps to approach the superior courts for urgent intervention. Therefore, it is requested that further orders be awaited before the conflicting orders of the high courts are acted upon" and further that "(w)e undertake that we will keep you informed and updated about the further orders of the courts".
12. The two above-mentioned Orders have been passed by the respective High Courts after completion of the stage of Scrutiny of nominations on 18.03.2025 and publication of the List of Valid Nominations on 19.03.2025 in terms of the Schedule published on 12.03.2025. Whilst the High Court of Delhi has directed BFI that "election process shall be continued" and that "the petitioners' i.e., DABA "be allowed to participate in the election process", the Himachal Pradesh High Court has directed BFI that "the last date of submission of nomination" be extended, to enable the second nominee from HPBA (viz. Mr. Anurag Singh Thakur) to file his nomination and fully participate in the AGM. This necessitates certain steps to be taken by BFI under the R&Rs and the Model Election Code. Having regard to the fact that the Model Election Code prescribes the time-lines for the election process, it is rendered practically impossible, with above mandated additions to the Electoral College List, for the electoral process to be continued and completed under the extant Schedule.
13. Thus, the process is paused till BFI informs the undersigned of the action taken in the wake of the court orders.
14. The Executive Director of BFI is requested to publish a copy of this on the official website of the BFI and also communicate to all concerned.

Dated: 21.03.2025



(Justice R.K. Gauba)

Returning Officer

For Elections of BFI (for term 2025-29)

ro2025bfi@gmail.com