

good time in a year training at a high-performance facility...Surely, that's the vision we have now," Indian rugby men's team captain Prince Khatri said at an event here on Wednesday.

In a big boost for India rugby, on Wednesday, Capgemini announced its partnership with the Indian Rugby Football Union (IRFU) to

runners-up at the Asia Rugby Sevens Trophy 2022 in Jakarta last month, losing to Singapore in the final. India women's rugby team's captain Vahbiz Bharucha felt that while earlier, her team's players were perceived to be smaller in size compared to others, good nutrition at a recently-held high-performance camp has helped them

recently had a 40-day camp. It's not a short time to train twice a day for six days of a week. Earlier, a common sight in camps was women players losing weight. Now, it doesn't happen. Now, you actually see them building up a lot of muscle. The players are now looking toned, professional and athletic," she added.

group chose former India batsman Sandeep Patil as its candidate for MCA president's post, at a meeting of its core committee, which was attended by group leader Ravi Savant, former India opener Sudhir Naik, former Mumbai captain Milind Rege and ex-MCA secretary PV Shetty. However, after the SC verdict a few hours later,

dam, Surendra Shewale, Prashant Sawant, Sandeep Vichare, Rajesh Mahant & Dawood Patel, Surendra Harimalkar, Iqbal Shaikh.

However, Savant gave a different list to TOL. "As per my list, the office-bearers' candidates are: "Sandeep Patil, Navin Shetty, Jagdish Achrekar, Neil Savant, Gaurav Payyade & Ajinkya Naik."

## Vijay Shirke resigns as chairman of RWITC

Vivek Jain

RWITC is making breaking news a habit. But nothing comes close to the decision of Vijay Shirke to resign as the chairman of the RWITC, with the committee elections barely a week away.



In a surprise early morning call to me in New York, Shirke shared that his colleagues have been opposing him on several matters, often without a debate, and his carrying on as chairman in this environment was meaningless. The chairman has been credited, virtually unanimously, for his understated exemplary

leadership and for leading the turnaround of the club, heading perhaps the most harmonious committee in years.

Dark clouds were evident on a seemingly trifling issue of granting ownership to an individual, opposed

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by both Shirke and the chairman of the stewards. Dissent was in the air, and the entry of three "newcomers" for the elections, further sharpened the growing divide. Sadly for the institution, when unity was the need of the hour, personal ambitions and politicking seemed to have won the day and delivered a virtual knock out to Shirke

(who not only managed to get State approvals expeditiously to keep racing going but also to his nameless contributions for stakes and other costs) from enjoying a deserved second term.

The rancour grew when the committee allegedly dismissed the chairman's plea on three suggestions made by the scrutiniser to contain the misuse of the E-voting process which has made the election a mockery of fair practice. This proved to be, ostensibly the final straw that has brought down the edifice of a continued smooth innings for the incumbent committee.

Shirke mentioned that his resignation is with a "feeling of sadness and despair" and that "in a sudden turn of events the committee stands sharply

divided in the upcoming election with the sceptre of groupism and vote bank politics" once again casting its dark shadow on the club and has led to, in the chairman's words "baseless accusations and acrimony" despite a truly stellar performance of a united committee, against all odds.

While there are always two sides to any debate, the RWITC will be the loser in the murky waters of RWITC politics which has once again gained a stranglehold on affairs of the club. The 1,756 members who are eligible to vote, are apt to wonder, what went so suddenly wrong, and is akin to a winning horse losing the race when it was at the finish line.

(VIVEK JAIN IS FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE RWITC. VIEWS ARE PERSONAL.)

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Liverpool 1 minute goal to of the Europ Joel Matip hea



Vijay B. Shirke

1205, Apte Road,  
Deccan Gymkhana,  
Pune 411 004

14<sup>th</sup> September, 2022

Dear Member,

I write this letter to you, on the eve of the elections to the managing committee, with a feeling of sadness and despair, after resigning as Chairman of the Committee of the RWITC on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2022.

Less than a month has elapsed since I had addressed a letter to all members regarding the achievements of the present Committee, which was only possible due to the unity and camaraderie shown through the entire term, which made all the combined efforts bear fruit. During this short period of nine months since the last election, your Committee has been able to raise resources exceeding Rs.50 crores through a combination of contributions, sponsorships, additional funds by re-negotiation of existing contracts, monetization of unused assets and recovery of old dues.

Unfortunately, in a sudden turn of events, the Committee stands divided in the upcoming election with the spectre of groupism and vote bank politics looming large on the Club.

The first disturbing issue was regarding a decision taken on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022, when by a 5/4 majority, ownership rights were granted to a person who had been rejected earlier in 2013, 2014 and 2019.

As the election date drew closer, an article by the former Chairman of RWITC appeared in The Times of India on 31<sup>st</sup> August, where Mr. Vivek Jain mentioned that the system of e-voting was prone to be misused, in so far as the passwords/OTP's could be given away / traded, which take away from the integrity of the election process, thus denying a free and fair vote.

I called Mr. Jain up and he requested me to try and do something about this situation. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of September I wrote to the NSDL and our Scrutinizer for the AGM, to find out whether a plausible solution would be found to curb the possible misuse of the e-voting process and prevent transfer of OTP's from the person to whom the voting right was issued to any other person. **Our Company's AGM Notice clearly mentions (Note 3 on Page 4) that sharing of e-mail ID/OTP will constitute an act of breach of the regulations of the Club.**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of September I received a reply from our Scrutinizer who made the following suggestions to try and limit this possible misuse:

1. To limit the maximum number of votes received from each I.P. address,
2. to request the service provider to make available the details of the I.P. address from which voting has been initiated so that excessive votes from a single I.P. address would be located, and



Vijay B. Shirke

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3. to issue an additional notice to all members informing them that OTP's should not be handed over to any other person as it is contrary to the provision of law.

I therefore put these proposals up in the Agenda of the Committee meeting to be held on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2022. However, this item was deferred and put up again on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 in an Emergency Committee meeting, where all the three suggestions were rejected by a majority vote of 5/4. I personally felt that at least the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> suggestion could be implemented as this would provide some sort of a deterrent, if at all such a practice of giving away OTP's was in vogue. In fact, the third suggestion as mentioned earlier is a part of our AGM Notice and is also followed by Clubs like C.C.I.

These two events led to a lot of baseless accusations, acrimony and bitterness in the Committee, which till now was working as a harmonious unit. **Since I had put up this proposal to try and plug the loopholes, if any, in the system of e-voting, and serious doubts about my intentions were being cast as to the reasons for bringing these issues at this stage, I felt that my continuing in the Chair would not be tenable.**

I would like to thank Mr. Khushroo Dhunjibhoy, Mr. Jehangir Mehta and Mr. Sunil Jhangiani, who supported me in both the issues.

As I demit the post of Chairman of the Club, I would request **all** 1,700+ Club Members to cast their votes on their own and join hands to select a responsible team which will not only improve the financial stability of the Club, but take horse racing to the stature it held in its heydays.

In case I do get re-elected, I will continue to look after the interests of our Club in any way I can.

With warm regards,

Vijay Shirke

VIJAY B. SHIRKE

P.S.: If you wish to have any further information regarding our Club, please feel free to contact me on my Mobile No. [REDACTED]