

BEFORE THE ANTI-DOPING APPEAL PANEL

J.L.N. Stadium, Lodhi Road, New Delhi -110 003

Appeal No.- 25/ADAP/2025

(PROCEEDINGS CONDUCTED THROUGH VIRTUAL MODE)

IN THE MATTER OF:

Ramesh Nagapuri (Coach) APPELLANT

Vs

National Anti-Doping Agency RESPONDENT

**Quorum: Ms. Geetanjali Sharma, Chairperson
Dr. Rana Chengappa, Member
Ms. Rani Rampal, Member**

Present: Mr. Parth Goswami, and Mr. Ranjeet Pawar, Advocates along with
Mr. Ramesh Nagapuri, Coach in-person (Appellant)
Mr. Prateek Dhanda, Advocate with Mr. Yasir Arafat, Law Officer
for NADA. (Respondent)

JUDGEMENT DATED-20-03-2026

1. The Appellant, Ramesh Nagapuri (the Coach), has preferred the present appeal against the order dated 03.07.2025 passed by the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) in Case No. 109/ADDP/2025 (“impugned order”), whereby his application seeking revocation of the provisional suspension was dismissed.
2. **The Relevant Facts of the Present Appeals are as follows:**
 - i. According to the Supplementary Reports of the Doping Control Form (“DCF”) on records, on 02.12.2024, the Doping Control Officer of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) was assigned to collect doping samples from the Athletes at G.M.C. Balayogi Athletics Stadium in Hyderabad. During the notification process, Coach Mr. Ramesh Nagapuri prevented the Athlete from signing the Notification form. Furthermore, the Coach instructed the Athletes to leave the venue, resulting in the Athletes successfully evading the doping test. Additionally, the Coach failed to provide the contact details of the Athletes under his training, thereby demonstrating a malicious intent and preventing the collection of the necessary samples.
 - ii. Pursuant to Article 7.2.1 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021 (NADR, 2021), an initial review of the potential Anti-Doping Rule Violation was conducted on 07.03.2025, following which it is recommended inter alia as “ *Prima Facie it appears that Mr. Ramesh Nagapuri assisted the Athletes in evading the doping control test and accordingly, it is recommended that the proceedings may be initiated against the Coach Mr. Ramesh Nagapuri in accordance with Article 2.5” Tampering or Attempted Tampering with any part of Doping Control by an Athlete or Other*

Person of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021”. Based on the report submitted by the Intelligence and Investigation, it appears that the Coach, Mr. Ramesh Nagapuri, intentionally helped the Athlete in evasion from the sample collection process, thus violated Article 2.9 of NADR 2021. Therefore, it is imperative to proceed with the case as a violation of Article 2.9 of the NADR, 2021.

- iii. Subsequently, a notification was issued to the Coach on 17.03.2025 for a violation of Article 2.9, which addresses Complicity or Attempted Complicity by an Athlete or Other Person in assisting, encouraging, aiding, abetting, conspiring, covering up or any other type of intentional complicity or Attempted complicity involving an anti-doping rule violation, Attempted anti-doping rule violation or violation of Article 10.14.1 by another Person. As a result, the Coach was provisionally suspended from participating in any further sporting activity until the conclusion of the pending disciplinary proceedings against him.
- iv. In response to the said Notification, the Coach denied all allegations levelled against him and further challenged the legality of the provisional suspension imposed, formally requesting a hearing for its revocation.
- v. The first request to lift the provisional suspension was rejected by Ld. ADDP vide order dated 03.07.2025.
- vi. Hence, this appeal for setting aside the impugned order dated 03.07.2025 passed by Ld. Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel and requests the revocation of the provisional suspension.
- vii. Final arguments heard on 26.09.2025, the parties addressed their respective arguments, following which the judgment was reserved.
- viii. In the present case, there is some difference of opinion between members of this hearing Panel. The minority view is that prima facie, the coach has committed an anti-doping rule violation as alleged by interfering in the doping control process and assisting the athletes to evasion from the process.

3. OBSERVATION AND DECISION:

- (i) I have gone through the pleading, evidences, documents and arguments placed by both the parties.
- (ii) According to my opinion the coach interfered in the notification, diverted the athletes to training and refused contact information thereby the coach created the conditions that enabled evasion. Under WADA jurisprudence, such conduct constitutes assistance and encouragement under Article 2.9, therefore his suspension is justified.
- (iii) Accordingly, there is no ground to revoke the suspension passed by the National Anti-Doping Agency vide notification dated 17-03-2025 for violation of the Anti-Doping Rules, 2021.

Rana
Kanganda
Chengappa
Dr. Rana Chengappa
(Medical Member)

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Rana Kanganda
Chengappa
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2. FACTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE CASE:

- i. According to the Supplementary Reports of the Doping Control Form (“DCF”) on records, on 02.12.2024, the Doping Control Officer of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) was assigned to collect doping samples from the Athletes at G.M.C. Balayogi Athletics Stadium in Hyderabad. During the notification process, Coach Mr. Ramesh Nagapuri prevented the Athlete from signing the Notification form. Furthermore, the Coach instructed the Athletes to leave the venue, resulting in the Athletes successfully evading the doping test. Additionally, the Coach failed to provide the contact details of the Athletes under his training, thereby demonstrating a malicious intent and preventing the collection of the necessary samples.
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- vi. Hence, this appeal for setting aside the impugned order dated 03.07.2025 passed by Ld. Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel and the revocation of the provisional suspension.
- vii. Final arguments heard on 26.09.2025, the parties addressed their respective arguments, following which the judgment was reserved.
- viii. In the present case, there is some difference of opinion between members of this hearing Panel. The majority view is that prima facie, the coach has not committed an anti-doping rule violation as alleged.

3. MAJORITY VIEW:

Sports Member: -

- (i) In my opinion, if the players ran away from the dope test, it is ultimately their own responsibility. Athletes are aware of anti-doping rules and they know that refusing or evading a doping test can lead to serious punishment. Even if the coach suggested that they leave or avoid the test, the players should have understood the consequences and complied with the testing officials.
- (ii) Athletes are educated about their obligations under anti-doping regulations, including the requirement to cooperate with testing authorities. Therefore, the decision to evade the test cannot be placed entirely on the coach. The players had the responsibility to stay and complete the procedure.

- (iii) For the above reasons, the Appellant should not be punished solely for the athletes' actions, because the athletes themselves are accountable for following the rules and facing the consequences of their own decisions.

Chairman: -

- (i) In the present case the Respondent (NADA) has submitted that based on WADA's intelligence regarding the appellant(Coach), the appellant was allegedly encouraging athletes under his supervision to use prohibited substances and six athletes were identified in intelligence target testing. Accordingly, target testing was planned at the GMC Balayogi Stadium, Hyderabad and DCOs were deputed to collect dope samples and the alleged incident took place. The respondent contended that the Appellant (coach) interfered with or subverted the doping control process and has assisted the Athletes in evasion of sample collection.
- (ii) The Appellant aggrieved with the provisional suspension imposed vide Notice of Charge dated 18.06.2025 by the National Anti-Doping Agency, appeared before the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel and filed application for revocation of his provisional suspension. The interim application of the Appellant under Article 7.4.3 of the Anti-Doping Rules, 2021 ['ADR'] was rejected by the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel and thereafter the appellant filed the present Appeal before this Panel to set-aside the interim order passed by the "ADDP" and revoke the provisional suspension imposed by the NADA.
- (iii) Since, the matter is pending for final adjudication before the Ld. Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel ("ADDP") without commenting on the merits of the case and only based on the initial submissions placed by both the parties till date, the provisional suspension imposed upon the Appellant by the National Anti-Doping Agency is revoked till the final disposal of the case by the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel ("ADDP").
- (iv) This ruling is confined to the facts of the present case, shall not be treated as a precedent for future cases, and has been rendered in light of the facts and circumstances considered by this Hearing Panel.
- (v) The minority view is being authored separately.

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Rani Rampal
Sports Member

Geetanjali Sharma
Chairman