



GoodSport NEWS

S R I L A N K A O L Y M P I C W E E K L Y N E W S B U L L E T I N

NOC SL News

Next Olympic medal may not be a pipe dream



Rs. 40 million upliftment for youth athletics with Crysbro-NOC SL "Next Champ" project

Sri Lanka's last Olympic Medal came our way, way-back during the change of the last millennium in the year 2000 at the Sydney Olympics when Susanthika Jayasinghe became the only Asian to win an Olympic sprint medal – a feat that stands up to date. Since, we Lankans-

have been scraping the bottom in search for something elusive even at the Asian Games level without any success – a medal of worth, to call our own.

Not that the authorities have not been concerned or the cause has gone unnoticed. But, always there has been something amiss – they fail even to qualify in most cases.

In reality we have failed to produce the Susanthikas, the Dharshas, Thilakarathnes and the Kulawansas who saw to that the Lankan flag fluttered during international events in

These names were familiar in the international athletic circles. What we lacked in this sphere was a true blueprint that could be measured and checked back and was time bound. This led to lots of school kids giving up sports especially athletics, at the end of their school careers. They saw no solace in being a part of a system that is deflated. Now the far sighted conglomerate Crysbro who has been involved in the development of junior athletics for many a season has found another very influential partner in the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka (NOC SL) to come up with a project to changed the playing field.

the world in most cases.



Olympic Medalist Susanthika Jayasinghe makes the keynote address

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There they will sponsor young athletes from the tender age of 15-16 with an eye to win international medals as a first step of their task of producing Sri Lanka's next Olympic medallists.

Crysbro signed a landmark M O U with

NOCSL to launch the 'NOCSL - C R Y S B R O Next Champ' scholarship programme at the Sri

Lanka Foundation Institute where they are billed to invest over Rs 40 million over a period of two years.

The objective of this generous partnership is to uplift talented young athletes to the international sports arena.

R.L.S.R. Laksarani
Weightlifting

Under the agreement, Crysbro will serve as the sponsor of 20 deserving athletes scouted by NOCSL, with potential to qualify for the Youth Olympic Games 2022, Asian Games 2022, Commonwealth Games 2022 and South Asian Games 2021.

Scouting for potential athletes was done by a panel which included Olympic medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe (Chairperson), SAG medallist Ineka Wickremasinghe and former South Asia's fastest in one era Shehan Ambeypitiya and Olympian swimmer Reshika Udugampola.

Spokesman for the project, Shehan Ambeypitiya stated they contacted all National Sports Associations to nominate their top Under-16 candidates for the said scholarship, and then interviewed each and every one of them.

They have taken into consideration young athletes' last two years performance and Youth Asian Championship and Youth Olympic qualification standards when short listing names, and have selected five -

W.D.K. Kumara
Weightlifting

D.M.T.D. Karunarathne
Athletics

“ The selected 20 athletes will be sponsored to the tune of Rs one million each annually ”

athletes initially to launch the programme.

They are - 1. H.H.R.S. Jayasundara [M] - Athletics - 200m & 400m 2. D.M.T.D. Karunarathne [F] - Athletics - 400m 3. W.D.K. Kumara [M] - Weightlifting 4. R.L.S.R. Laksarani [F] - Weightlifting 5. Milka Gehani Elpitiya Badalge Dona - (F) Gymnastics.

H.H.R.S. Jayasundara
Athletics - 200m & 400m



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Shehan Ambeypitiya explained “The committee will select the next five athletes at the end of this month and then keep next 10 slots open where young athletes with the hope that the next generation of our athletes will get the message and be motivated to perform in the upcoming events. We will then select those ten considering their performance at these events”.



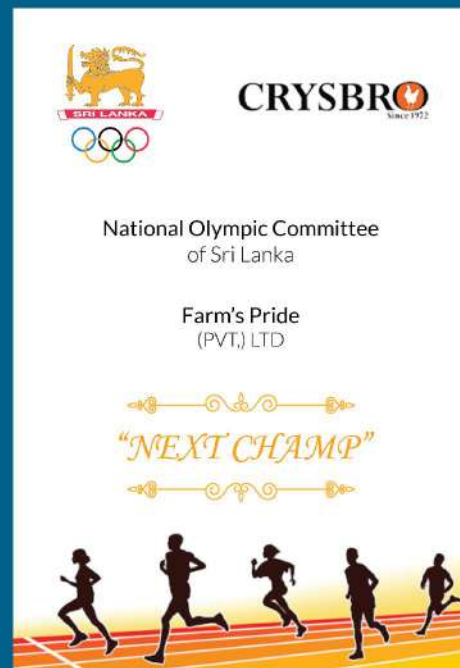
He said the selected 20 athletes will be sponsored to the tune of Rs one million each annually, that will cover expenses such as nutrition, transportation costs, coaching fees, accommodation, logistics (such as clothing, sports gear), and medical expenses. Also included is a separate fund that will be maintained to cover expenses of international events.

“We are working towards providing at least two international events per athlete per year to give them much needed competition exposure which Sri Lankan young athletes are lacking,” said Ambeypitiya.

Their initial target will be the 2021 Asian Youth Championship, Youth Commonwealth Games and Youth Olympic Games.

Besides the above, Crysbro will see the launch of an online portal, which for the very first time in Sri Lanka entrepreneurs and members of the public could come out and sponsor rural athletes, school sports associations, sports clubs and chambers financially. All funds channelled through this portal will be fully disbursed to the entities they were contributed, a process carefully overlooked and strictly managed by NOC SL. Meanwhile Olympic medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe said that this would be a golden opportunity for the next generation of Lankan athletes to revive their abilities.

She said “During our time there were no sponsors to support junior athletics in this manner.



I remember when I was a junior athlete I had to borrow spikes for my competitions. But now thanks to companies like Crysbro these young athletes will be given the financial backing so that they will have the necessary cushion to perform at the optimum level.

“Now the young generation of athletes will have to measure their success; develop themselves in stages – SAG, Asian Meets and Asian Games and then think of qualifying for the Olympic Games because getting to that point poses a lot of challenges.”

Besides the above; Maxwell de Silva – Secretary General, NOC SL, on the importance of the Partnership between Crysbro and NOC SL and how it will execute, – Mr. Amores Sellar, Senior Manager Sales & Marketing, Crysbro on the subject of “Contribution of Crysbro Next Champ to uplift rural buddy sport talent” and “The Importance of corporate sector contribution to uplift rural sport talent” by Mr. Suresh Subramaniam, President, NOC SL, spoke.

NOC Sri Lanka Conducted Virtual Olympic Solidarity Sport Administrators Course

National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka successfully conducted Virtual Olympic Solidarity Sport Administrators Course (VOSSAC) via BlueJeans last week on 17, 19, 21 and 22 September 2020.

The course was conducted while respecting all the COVID-19 guidelines. This has been encountered as the very first occasion that the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka (NOC Sri Lanka) conducted Olympic Solidarity Sport Administrators Course virtually.

A some of 78 candidates representing various sport organisations applied for the VOSSAC and 61 got selected to follow the course.

The selected participants were from diverse sporting background such as Tennis, Rugby, and ten undergraduates from the Sabragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. Apart from the above regional interest was noted with Ms. Himani Rawal from Delhi, India attended all sessions and showed her interest by active participation counted as the very first foreigner benefited in the NOC Sri Lanka course originated during this pandemic time.

All the registered candidates were interviewed individually one week prior to the course which was also conducted virtually. All selected participants were online throughout the course which consisted of five sessions over four days.

Each session had three hours of lectures and discussions. The sessions were conducted by the National Course Directors of NOC Sri Lanka - Mr. B.L.H. Perera, Group Capt. Nalin de Silva, and Ms. Oliviya Gamage. Mr. Gobinath Sivarajah provided his contribution as a resource person in this course.

Notably this is the very first occasion, a workbook was designed for this course by the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka to make online programmes more interactive.

The workbook consisted of ten activities which has two activities per session. It was mandatory to the participants to submit the duly completed workbook via email to receive the course participation certificate. Interestingly, 'Athlete 365' platform was also included as one of the activities in the workbook - all the participants were required to complete at least two courses on the platform.



Virtual Olympic Solidarity Sport Administrators Course 2020



“OLYMPISM AND CORONA” II

Since the first “Olympism and Corona” message in April, our message about the positive health, social and economic impacts of sport on society at large has gained considerable momentum.

What we can see now is that sport is widely recognised as an essential factor in fighting the pandemic, which still persists in many countries. Sport is also accepted as an integral part of the solution for the crisis recovery, which is underway in other countries.

Thankfully, we are also seeing live sports events taking place again. The very positive reception of these events clearly demonstrates that not only athletes and sports organisations but also the public at large have been longing for the return of sport as an integral part of our lives. We also see that sport can be organised safely, even under the ongoing restrictions.

This should give all of us confidence in our preparations for future events, including the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. I would like to thank all the people who have brought us this far by working tirelessly to

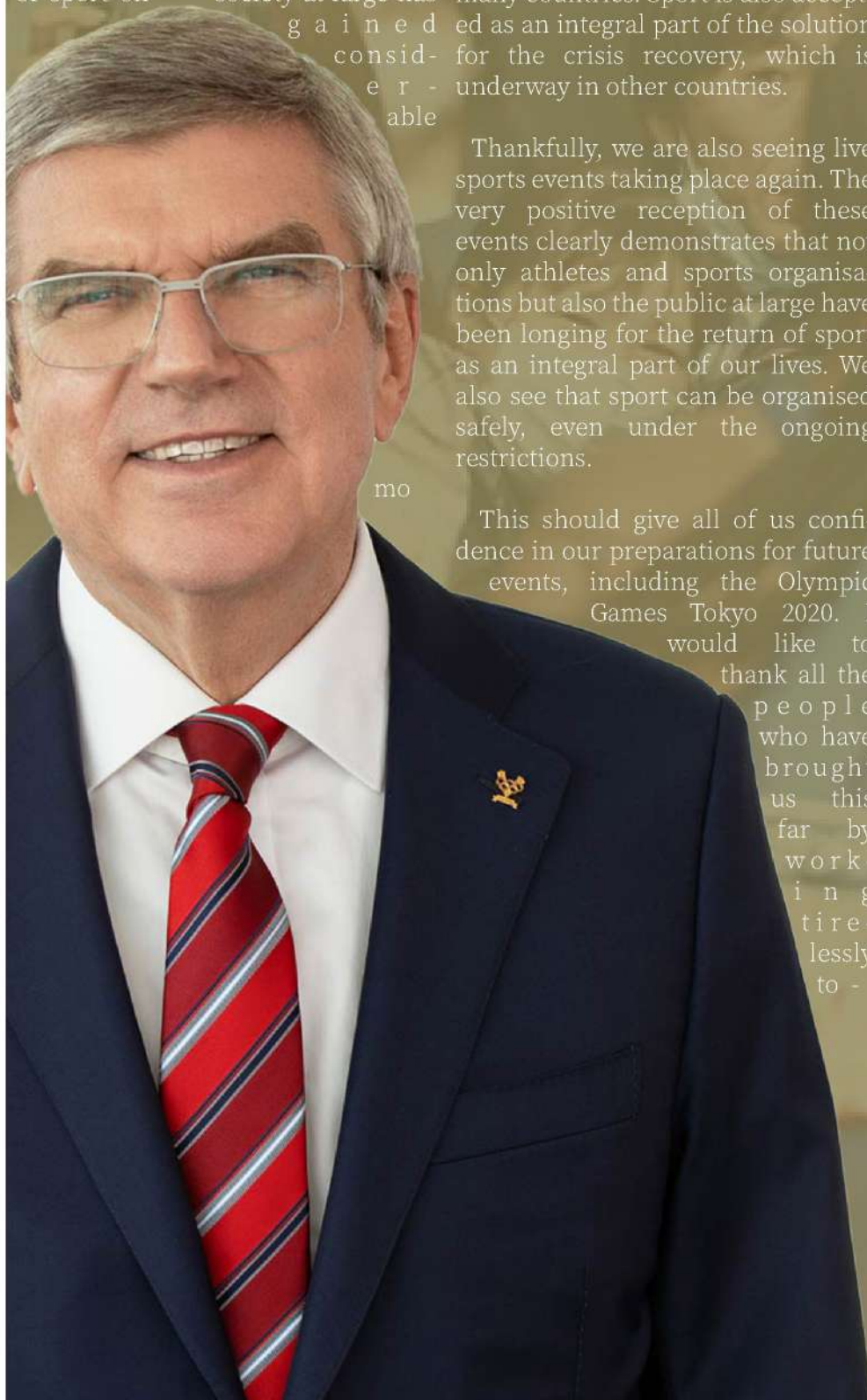
“Based on this early success, we are looking forward to the time when the many restrictions, which are essential now, can be eased.”

keep our societies going, and all of you in the sporting community who are working with great responsibility and creativity to organise sports events, safeguarding the health of all concerned.

Based on this early success, we are looking forward to the time when the many restrictions, which are essential now, can be eased. But we have to continue to act in a responsible way when it comes to planning and scheduling our sports events. The virus is not defeated yet. We must continue to contribute to its containment and be a part of the solution for the recovery from the crisis.

In our planning and scheduling, we all have a great responsibility, not only for our respective stakeholders, but for the entire sports community. From experience, we know that every mishap that affects one of us affects all of us – and has the potential to undo the great progress we have made together in the past few months.

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In this context, we are monitoring the potential of innovative testing methods for the safe organisation of events. In addition to the already existing test methods, there are a number of so-called rapid tests already on the market or under development. When used in combination with other virus countermeasures, such rapid tests give us an important additional tool to ensure a safe environment for everyone involved.

Further to this good news with regard to testing, there are very encouraging signals from the scientific and medical community about the availability of approved vaccines in the next few months, maybe even before the end of this year.

Taken together, the developments in testing and in vaccines will greatly facilitate the safe organisation of sports events. We should all take the timing of the availability of these new tools into consideration when it comes to the scheduling of our events. Therefore, to the many different scenarios the IOC is planning for, we have added one to fully exploit the potential of testing and vaccines.

“ We just do not yet know the full impact of any potential vaccine. But, altogether, there are good reasons for cautious optimism. ”

On the one hand, these recent weeks have shown that we can organise big sports events in a safe way even without a vaccine. On the other hand, we have to realise that even testing methods and vaccines are not the “silver bullet” that will solve all our problems.

We just do not yet know the full impact of any potential vaccine. But, altogether, there are good reasons for cautious optimism.

The IOC will continue to study these developments closely. We are also evaluating what consequences they would have for the organisation of sports events, ranging from the need to change certain rules of our respective organisations to medical, economic, social and logistical aspects.

To this end, we continue to cooperate closely with the World Health Organization, public authorities, medical and scientific experts, as well as pharmaceutical companies.

We are also drawing from the experience of those sports organisations that have recently organised successful events. We of course will share any insights with all those concerned among you, so that all of us in the Olympic Movement can benefit.

We have shown in recent months that we are indeed #StrongerTogether. In this spirit of solidarity, we should continue to make our contribution to the containment of the virus and to the recovery from the crisis.

In advance, I would already like to thank you very much for your continued cooperation in our shared endeavour to give hope and confidence to the world through sport.

