

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

November 29, 2022

Dear Members,

At the outset I would like to thank you all for choosing me as the ICA President.

The first meeting of the newly elected ICA Directors and the BCCI/IPL representatives was held on Nov 8 and 9, 2022 at our ICA office in Bengaluru. This was my first meeting as ICA President and it was very productive. Many issues, old and new, were discussed and resolved to take ICA to greater heights with a road map for time to come. The discussions were positive with each one putting across their views for effectiveness of ICA and its members.

As you all are aware that with the efforts of ICA and its representatives in BCCI/IPL, the Medical reimbursement was doubled from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh, the Gratis (pension) was almost doubled in most cases. Moreover, the women cricketers' match fees were also increased and brought at par with Men cricketers to maintain the gender equality. The ICA also introduced Top-up Medical Insurance Policies for the benefit of members and many of them have availed the same.

All this was achieved in most difficult times when COVID was in full force and most of the Apex council meetings were held virtually. I am sure all of you must be happy with the achievements and appreciated the same.

This was made possible with continuous follow up and courtesy of BCCI. In fact, the BCCI has changed its outlook towards ICA over a period of time and has been kind enough to accept our suggestions.

We are being funded to the extent of Rs 1 crore per annum by BCCI. While we are thankful to BCCI, this amount is just sufficient, at this point in time, to take care of our rent for office (both Regd office & Admin office), salary for staff, office expenses plus our retainership payment to legal consultant, company secretary consultant (to ensure compliance of Registrar of Companies regulations) and our auditors, etc. We have continued to use the services of these mandatory consultants and auditors who were engaged by BCCI at the time of incorporating ICA. We have also been using part of these funds to pay for the top-up medical policy for those members who do not fall under the medical reimbursement scheme of BCCI. In order to carry out more welfare activities to our members we plan to seek additional funds.

It will not be out of place to mention here that besides what was achieved by ICA for the members, ICA did help a lot of Men/Women member cricketers financially for Medical emergencies during the COVID turmoil. The ICA Directors collected more than Rs 50 lakh with their individual contacts besides BCCI funding. Yes, more money was put in by ICA to help the cause. Almost 80-odd cricketers were helped at a crucial time of their life and saved many from fatalities. They were grateful to ICA for the efforts. If one looks at the efforts put in by ICA and their representatives despite COVID times, I certainly feel it was commendable. For ICA, without the present cricketers being members, to achieve what has been achieved unlike other World Players Associations who have the distinct advantage of dictating terms to their respective Boards, was a great achievement. Let's not forget that the BCCI Office Bearers themselves were new when the ICA was formed thanks to the Supreme Court. It was a tough situation to handle for both BCCI and ICA.

Moreover, we have created a ICA web site for information of all and active participation of our members. I understand that some of us are not used to present technology and therefore ICA is also thinking of starting a periodical Bulletin to keep our members updated. All efforts will be made by us together for our welfare and recognition of ICA.

As for me as representative in the BCCI Apex council during the inaugural 2019-2022 period, it was one of my cricketing journeys to remember in the last 52 years that I have been involved in cricket/BCCI in different capacities, with lots to learn.

As ICA President now I and my colleagues, with the support of all of you, we could achieve well beyond imagination for the welfare of our members. We will make extra efforts to seek opportunities to facilitate and give exposure to our members to enhance their abilities/career either under the umbrella of ICA/BCCI or elsewhere. It is very important to keep our existing members actively involved in ICA along with new members for the functioning of the ICA.

We would certainly welcome more participation from our members with suggestions for ICA to be more pro-active and self-reliant. This approach will not only help ICA but all the members individually. We as ICA cannot survive individually. There needs a lot to be done, though as a Company there are limitations which we need to be aware of. ICA is a great platform built for the welfare of cricketers and if we all can't take advantage of the same, it would be disappointing.

I have observed that when ICA was formed, all were excited and became members but thereafter there has been silence from most of the members which is disturbing. We all should remember that the increase in Medical/ Gratis (Pension) has come into effect because of ICA's efforts and there is more to achieve for our fellow cricketers and their families. It's my humble request not to take a backseat because you have got what you wanted individually. I therefore request all our members to activate themselves and come together for a Unicorn cause. Please do not miss this opportunity and only think of what you are going to get without doing any efforts. One cannot clap with one hand. Please understand, a group is always heard more than an individual. So, let's all be together and work together to achieve our GOALS. "GOD HELPS THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES", is a very apt saying.

The ICA had a few other recommendations to BCCI for the welfare of ex-cricketers. Kindly understand when I mean CRICKETERS it is both Women and Men. Some of them have been agreed to and some are to be taken up (again and again) for BCCI's consideration with rigorous follow up. It's an uphill task because unlike other overseas cricketers' association where in the current players are also members and it becomes easier to negotiate as mentioned earlier, we don't have that luxury. However, we have a few major things to settle for our members and those are – Gratis (pension) to the Widows of eligible First-Class cricketers, Gratis (pension) to First-Class cricketers who have played 10 to 24 First-Class matches, Women cricketers pension criteria, One-time payment to First-Class cricketers.

All is possible with better liaising of BCCI and State Cricket Associations. Moreover, we will be shortly having meeting with all state representatives at various places where by a guideline will be given to them as far as the scope of work and the work area is concerned. The logistics for the same is being worked out.

Members, friends let us be together and work together for the welfare of all our ex-cricketers. We at ICA need your support, so kindly help us for your growth.

AUNSHUMAN GAEKWAD