

News / Sports / Other Sports / WFI membership suspended by world federation over failure to conduct elections

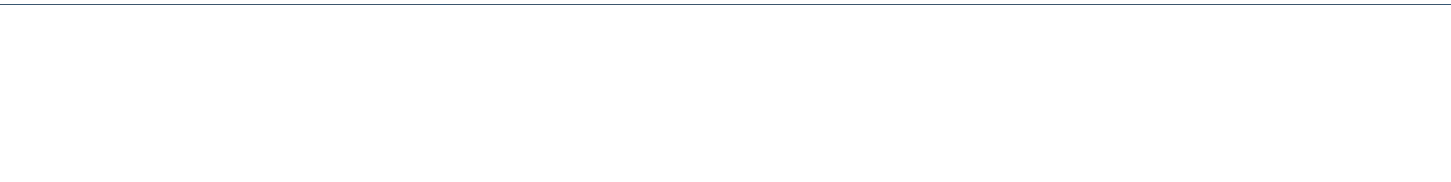
Wrestling Federation of India membership suspended on world stage

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)'s membership has been suspended indefinitely by the United World Wrestling (UWW) over it's failure to conduct elections.

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Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh was charged with sexual harassment and stalking in a chargesheet filed by Delhi Police on June 15.



Himanshu Mishra 

New Delhi, UPDATED: Aug 24, 2023 14:18 IST

In Short

- United World Wrestling has suspended the membership of the Wrestling Federation of India
- World wrestling body has suspended the WFI for not conducting its elections on time
- WFI has been embroiled in a series of controversies, causing its elections to be postponed significantly

The United World Wrestling (UWW) has indefinitely suspended the membership of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) due to the federation's failure to conduct the necessary elections.

The WFI has been embroiled in a series of controversies, causing its elections to be



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repeatedly postponed due to a series of protests by Indian wrestlers and legal petitions from various state units.

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UWW, the world governing body for wrestling, has suspended the WFI for not conducting its elections on time, a development that will not allow Indian grapplers to compete at the upcoming World Championships under the Indian flag.

The Indian wrestlers will have to compete as 'neutral athletes' at the Olympic-qualifying World Championships starting September 16 as the ad-hoc panel, led by Bhupender Singh Bajwa, did not honour the 45-day deadline for conducting the elections. The wrestlers, though, can compete under the Indian flag at the Asian Games, starting September 23 in Hangzhou, since it's the IOA that has sent entries and not the WFI.



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The elections for 15 positions on the WFI's governing body were scheduled to be held on August 12. On Monday, four candidates, including outgoing Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's close aide Sanjay Singh from Uttar Pradesh, filed nominations for the post of president at the Olympic Bhawan in New Delhi.



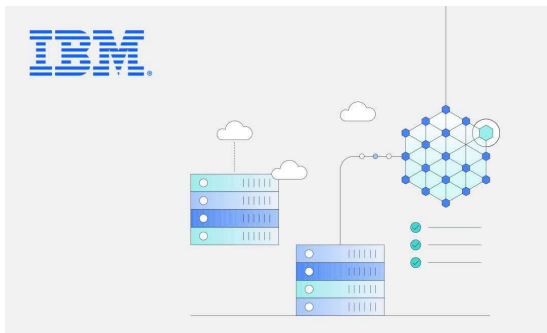
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Darshan Lal of the Chandigarh wrestling body was nominated for the position of general secretary, while SP Deswal of Uttarakhand was nominated for treasurer from the Brij Bhushan camp.

The WFI was suspended first in January and then again in May after India's top wrestlers protested against its functioning and alleged its then president Brij Bhushan sexually harassed female wrestlers. The day-to-day affairs of WFI are currently being managed by the Indian Olympic Association-constituted ad-hoc committee led by Bhupender Singh Bajwa.

Notably, the United World Wrestling, the governing body of the sport at the highest level, warned WFI of suspension if the elections were delayed.

Maharashtra and Tripura will not have any representatives at the elections as the Returning Officer deemed claims of both factions from the former "ineligible", while Tripura has remained disaffiliated since 2016.

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