

## **WSF Penalises Pakistan Federation Chief**

*7 October 2011*

The **World Squash Federation (WSF)** has taken action against **Pakistan Squash Federation** Honorary Secretary **Irfan Asghar** for bringing both the sport and the Federation into disrepute.

In an interview given to The News newspaper in Pakistan and a website on 12 and 14 July, Asghar alleged:

(a) That a delay by the WSF in sending visa letters to Pakistan was the prime reason why the Belgium Embassy in Islamabad refused to issue visas to Pakistani players, preventing them from participating in the World Junior Individual Championship (13 - 17 July, Belgium); and

(b) The WSF President (Mr N Ramachandran) had a malicious role in preventing the Pakistani players from obtaining the visas.

The allegations were put to Irfan Asghar by the WSF Disciplinary and Appeals Committee (DAC) who denied that he had spoken to the journalist, Khalid Hussein of The News; and suggested that these comments were totally a personal statement by the journalist and, in effect, suggested he was neither reliable nor credible.

Upon enquiry, the telephone log of the journalist proved that a phone call of six minutes duration on 11 July 2011 came from the mobile phone number of Irfan Asghar.

The DAC reached the view that such a conversation did take place and that the comments as reported in the press were made by Irfan Asghar.

In respect to the visa application for the Pakistani players, the DAC established that the first request for a letter of support from WSF was made on 24 June 2011. This was less than three weeks before the start of the championship. This request for the letter of support was confused in that it was sent to the German hosts of the World Men's Team Championship, which was an unrelated championship.

A follow up email was sent by Pakistan Squash to WSF on 29 June. Their email clarified their request and the support letter was sent by WSF the same day this follow up was received.

Given the confusion caused by forwarding the request to the organisers of another event, the DAC did not accept that there was any fault with the WSF office, and took the view that the requests were unreasonably late and there must have been doubt whether visas could have been issued prior to the event in any case.

The allegation made by Irfan Asghar in respect to Mr N Ramachandran was in effect an allegation of corruption by the President of the WSF. The DAC determined that the WSF President has no involvement in such matters and that as there was an immediate response this was completely unfounded and the malicious allegation brought the President, the World Squash Federation, and the sport into disrepute.

The decision of the DAC is to ban Irfan Asghar from any involvement in all WSF events for a period of 12 months from 7 October 2011 and to impose a fine of (GB Pounds)£500.00, payable within 30 days.

**- ENDS -**

### **Note to editors:**

There is a right of appeal to a WSF Appeals Panel; an intention to appeal must be notified within seven days of 7 October 2011.

The WSF Appeals Panel may confirm, set aside, reduce, or increase, any penalties imposed by the DAC.

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