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ATTACKING EVILS

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

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Ref: NCCL/AHD/VKS/GEN/01/

Date: 14/08/2008

Shri Manmohan Singh
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India,
7, Race Course Road,
New Delhi.

Dear Prime Minister,

Sub: Flagging Failure while Shooting Success

On the 11th of August 2008, our Sher e' Punjab shot his way to Gold in Beijing Olympics and flooded our land with an emotion of overwhelming nationalism. In the new millennium, India was used to being called a super-power, economic giant, brain bank, progressive state, mature democracy, cultural panorama and what not! But we had one grouse that was burrowing deep into our psyche – that of not being an Olympic nation and not producing even one golden sportsman for decades and much longer.

With one shot of a bullet, Mr. Abhinav Bindra turned his hometown “Chandi”garh to “Sona”garh and filled the nation with the ecstasy of success. For a society scarred by terrorist attacks, trivialization of polity, corruption and daily desperation, this achievement came in as a breeze of fresh air. The nation is filled with joy and hooked to the television, viewing and reviewing the glory of this elusive gold.

We watched on the television the award ceremony of this golden moment, broadcast repeatedly on every channel. The National Anthem played to the background and the pride of India resonated in Beijing. The tricolour flew free in the Olympic wind. **But at that moment of overwhelming Indian-ness, I noticed that in the National Flag, the saffron had been replaced by yellow.** In utter shock and disbelief, I rang up a number of friends to carefully watch and let me know. It turned out to be true – that the tricolour in Beijing flew with a yellow colour to the background of our national pride of Olympic gold medal winner.

This is a matter of serious indignity to the National Flag and our national failure to rise to the occasion of international representation of India. This is also unjustifiable being a flagrant violation of the provisions of the constitution. This serious lapse speaks of the gross negligence of the foreign office in Beijing, carelessness of the Indian Olympic Committee, lack of nationalism by the management of Indian contingent to the Olympics and an overall disrespect to the National Flag by everyone associated with our Olympic endeavour at Beijing. At the core, it also reflects the corrosion and erosion of nationalism at the high echelons of Governance and nobody lesser than the Chairman of the Indian Olympic Committee should be held responsible for the incident, as the video footage will now transcend into the history of our nation and misrepresent India forever.

The National Council for Civil Liberties hereby impresses upon your good-self that an apology to the Nation and immediate replacement of the faulty National Flags at Beijing are to be made urgently.

Last year, the Hon'ble Supreme Court expressed that "God only can save our Nation" while placing on record its frustration at the growing disrespect to nationalism in the country. This year, the Apex Court expressed that "even God cannot save this Nation" and breathed its deep desperation. But we cannot allow our society, our national pride, our historic symbols and our identity be sullied and ignored by those who are expected to protect them on our behalf.

We shall appeal to the Hon'ble Court to get beyond the growing desperation and protect the nationalism, if the Government and its representatives continue to ignore their duty and indulge in meaningless merry making while representing the country at places like Beijing and on occasions likes Olympics.

Your goodself is requested to instruct the concerned authorities for immediate apology and stern action on this historic failure.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

For **National Council for Civil Liberties**

V K SAXENA
PRESIDENT



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