

Exclusive interaction with Ranbir leading (Para) Swimming Coach

Name: Ranbir

Age: 31

Date of Birth: 17/09/1993

Place of Birth: Talu, Bhiwani, Haryana

Educational Institutes Attended:

- Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak
- Kalinga University, Raipur
- Swarnim Gujarat Sports University, Gandhinagar
- SAI NSWC, Gandhinagar
- American Swimming Coaches Association

Educational Qualification:

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Physical Education
- Diploma in Sports Coaching (Swimming)
- ASCA Level 1 to 5 Certification
- 28+ National and international certification

Currently Working as: Assistant Swimming Coach, Sports Authority of India (SAI), National Centre of Excellence, New Delhi.

Introduction to Swimming: Began competitive swimming in Haryana and represented the state at various national-level events.

First Coach:

General: Balwan Singh

In Swimming: Ankur Singh Saini

In Para Swimming: Dr. VK Dabas

In Deaf Swimming: Shridhar Ananth

Your favorite Indian swimmer (if any & why):

Virdhawal Khade — admired for his winning mindset and refusal to give up.

Your favorite International swimmer (if any & why):

Michael Phelps — proved that with determination, nothing is impossible. His record medal haul in a single Olympics is a testament to human potential.

Turing Point in Life:

When Ankur Singh Saini Sir entered my life.

Coaching opportunity with Para Team India under Dr. VK Dabas

When Shridhar Ananth invited me to conduct Deaflympics trials.



Most Cherished moment is life:

Becoming the first Indian coach to train a visually impaired (VI) swimmer, Himanshu Nandal, who qualified in:

- 3 Events for the Paralympics 2024
- 5 Events at the Para Asian Games 2023
- 4 Events at the World Para Swimming Championships 2025
- Being appointed as a coach for the Indian Para Swimming Team for Citi World Para series Singapore 2024 and coaching Deaf and Para swimmers who qualified for international championships like the Citi Para World Series, Para Asian Games, Deaf Asian Games, and World Championships.
- Serving as Selection Committee Member for Deaf Swimming in the All India Sports Council of the Deaf (AISCD) for the financial year 2025–2026.

Major Achievements as a swimmer:

Represented Haryana in National Triathlon, 2014

Participated in National Games, Kerala, 2015

Competed in Senior National Aquatic Championship, Rajkot, 2016

Participated in All India University, 2017

Gold Medalist in Haryana Senior State, 2015

Bronze Medalist in Haryana Senior State, 2016

Bronze Medalist in Khel Mahakumbh, 2017



Awarded Dronacharya Award/ Major Award/ Recognition in the year:

I give credit of my success to:

I give credit for my success to my family, coaches, teachers, the Sports Authority of India, my seniors, and my swimmers.

Why you decided to be a swimming coach:

During my swimming career, I had no coach. I trained without proper guidance and realized I could have achieved much more with the right support. That experience led me to promise myself that I would become a coach who could guide swimmers like me to national and international success.

Major Achievements as a Coach:

- First Indian coach to train a VI swimmer, Himanshu Nandal, who qualified in three events for the Paralympics 2024, 5 events in Para Asian Games 2023, and 4 event's in World Championships 2025.
- 85 medals won with 18 NR by my swimmers in PARA Senior & Junior National Swimming Championships.
- 12 medals won with 4 NR by my swimmers in Deaf Senior & Junior National Swimming Championships 2025.
- Coached athletes who qualified for Paralympics, Para Asian Games, Deaf Asian Games, 3 times Citi Para World Series and PARA World Championship.

What are the challenges (if any) involved in coaching elite swimmers:

- Lack of public faith in para and deaf swimming.
- Inadequate resources and limited recognition for differently abled athletes.

What is your advice to elite swimmers:

- Stay focused and disciplined.
- Trust your coach and the process.
- Continuously strive to outperform your past self.

What are the challenges you faced if any training the differently abled swimmers:

- Initially had no knowledge about para sports. & It's a big challenge for me but I accept it and start gaining my knowledge about Para and specially how to trained VI Swimmer because they feel only touch and adaptive techniques.
- Training a visually impaired swimmer like Himanshu Nandal required immense learning and adaptation.



How can Indian Swimming Progress:

Enhanced facilities and support from grassroots to elite level.

Inclusion of para and deaf athletes in mainstream programs.

Greater public awareness and increased funding.

What all has changed for good in Indian swimming since you started coaching:

More structured events and selection trials.

Improved coaching education and anti-doping initiatives.

Recognition and opportunities for para and deaf swimmers have increased.

How are you contributing currently to Indian Swimming:

Coaching elite para and deaf athletes at SAI NCOE.

Serving as Chief Coach for Delhi PCI and Technical Official at national events.

Mentoring upcoming swimmers to achieve their full potential.

2 times World Triathlon Para Cup medalist

Asian Para Triathlon Championship medalist

2018, 2022 Asian Para Games

Several National and State medalist

How you see yourself five years from now:

- To be Head Coach of the Indian Para or Deaflympics Swimming Team.
- To develop more international medalists.
- To promote inclusive and progressive swimming culture in India.

Message:

“Believe in yourself. Never give up. Your journey may be tough, but with hard work, the right guidance, and self-belief, you can achieve anything in life.”

What are the challenges (if any) involved in coaching elite swimmers: I believe there is no such challenges, just there is the need of involvement of sports science from grassroot level along with eligible manpower to evaluate training data

What is your advice to elite swimmers: To develop leadership quality among yourself and trust yourself

What are the challenges you faced if any training the differently abled swimmers: As such there are no challenges, but there should be presence of personalized training equipment satisfying training needs of different impairment.



How can Indian Swimming Progress: This is a huge topic to discuss on –

1. There should be presence of Sports Science research and analysis department in every district.
2. People employed in the Sports department should be on the basis of their ability and not on identity.
3. There should be segregation of teachers and coaches.
4. There should be segregation of levels of coaches based on their ability and not on their identity
5. Performer athlete and Awardee coaches should mandatorily devote their time to coaching at least for 10 years after retirement from active sports or receiving the awards.
6. The coaching data/experience should be documented for study and analysis purpose.
7. And many others

What all has changed for good in Indian swimming since you started coaching: There are different types of people –

1. Who looks at Paralympic/Olympic/World Championship/Asian Games participation as success.
2. Who looks at the long term athlete development plan and achieving goals and creating a momentum of performance in swimming as a achievement

I am among the second types of people. So we are far from there.

How are you contributing currently to Indian Swimming: By coaching budding athlete. I had developed the STC and CEO program for para sports in 2015 when I was the Coordinator at the Sports Authority of India. These programs are now bringing laurels to the nation.

How you see yourself five years from now: I target a long term goal targeting 2036.

MEENAKSHI PAHUJA



45th Edition, V.K. Pahuja Swimming Statistical Bulletin 2025