

Welfare and support schemes for sportspersons

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‘Sports’ being a State subject the responsibility for providing sports infrastructure and training rests with the State Government. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Government. Further, the Government has undertaken a series of measures to address the challenges faced by sportspersons and coaches/trainers, aimed at enhancing their financial security, training infrastructure, and mental wellness support through various schemes/programmes of this Ministry such as:

- Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS): Provides comprehensive support to selected sportspersons including monthly Out-of-Pocket Allowance (OPA), access to international training, coaching, physiotherapy, mental conditioning, and equipment.
- Khelo India Scheme: Focuses on talent identification, infrastructure development, athlete scholarships, and coaching support at both grassroots and elite levels.
- Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF): Financial support is provided towards training of athletes which includes all requisite facilities for their preparations including wholesome nutritious diet, food supplements, equipment support, state-of-the-art infrastructure, lodging, travelling facilities, services of reputed Coaches/supporting staff, scientific & medical support, sports kit, etc. besides financial assistance for their training abroad and participation in international competitions in India and abroad.
- Scheme of Sports Fund for Pension to Meritorious Sportspersons provides additional financial security to sportspersons post retirement from active sports career in the form of life-time pension ranging from ₹12,000/- to ₹20,000/- per month. The sportspersons, who are retired from an active sports career and won medals in Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, World Cup, World Championships, Asian Games, Para Asian Games and Commonwealth Games, are eligible for life-time pension under the scheme.
- Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Welfare Program for Sportspersons: Provides financial aid to sportspersons and their families for injury, hardship, equipment, and event participation etc.

To provide mental wellness support to sportspersons, sport psychologists and mental trainers are engaged at both national team and individual levels. Presence of a sports psychologist, including High-Performance Analyst (Psychology) or Performance Analyst (Psychology) is ensured at the National Centres of Excellence (NCoE) of SAI. These sports psychologists are responsible for helping the athletes with the mental training pertaining to optimal performance, as well as enabling them to achieve emotional wellbeing also.

Further the Government has recently announced Khelo Bharat Niti-2025 which also, *inter-alia*, has provisions to address the challenges being faced by the sportspersons and the coaches/trainers.

The Government has adopted a series of measures to ensure the timely and transparent disbursement of financial assistance and incentives to sportspersons/coaches under various schemes. Key measures among these is the implementation of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mechanism for disbursement and online portals to digitize the process of inviting applications, thus ensuring the timely and efficient disbursement of financial assistance/incentives to beneficiaries. Under this system, financial assistance/support is directly transferred into the bank accounts of the sportspersons/coaches thereby eliminating delays, reduces administrative bottlenecks, and ensures that the benefits reach the intended beneficiaries in a timely and efficient manner.

This information was given by the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya in written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today.

MG/DK

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