

REFORMS IN ATHLETE SELECTION

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The Government recognizes National Sports Federations (NSFs) at the national level for the promotion and development of sports, as per the criteria laid down in the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011 (Sports Code). The selection of sportspersons for participation in international events is the responsibility of the concerned NSF. The NSFs are required to adopt impartial and transparent selection procedures and ensuring accountability and transparency at all levels.

Under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), the financial assistance is provided to Athlete for training and participation in competitions and out-of-pocket allowance (OPA) on monthly basis. The assistance is provided through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) portal in a timely manner with no delay.

Further, under the Scheme of Assistance to NSFs competing athletes and coaches are provided OPA during the international sporting event as per approved norms and after receiving the required documents. The submission of incomplete details causes delay in releasing OPA to the beneficiaries.

Apart from above, the disbursement of funds for Out of Pocket Allowance (OPA) is done through the DBT mode for the Khelo India Athletes (KIAs) under the Khelo India Scheme with no delay.

The Ministry on 05.03.2025 issued instructions relating to selection of sportspersons for participation in international events, inclusion in coaching camps and selection of coaches/support staff. As per the instructions, participation in International events will be the responsibility of NSFs and Government and SAI have no direct involvement. The other salient features of the instructions are:

- NSFs must have a standard selection policy for all events and camps. Policy must be uploaded on NSF websites and updated at least 3 months before any event.
- Selection trials must be video recorded or monitored via CCTV. Recordings must be sent to SAI with minutes of the selection committee.
- Policies for Olympics, Asian Games, etc., must be published on the website of the NSF at least 2 years in advance.
- Selection Committee to be formed by NSF President. Selection Committee should ideally be headed by High Performance Director/Chief Coach/Foreign Coach/former international Player (preferably Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Awardee/ Arjuna Awardee), Sportspersons of Outstanding Merit (SOM), who must have retired from active sports for at least four years.
- Grievance Redressal Mechanism must be in place grievances resolved within 7 days. Grievance committees must be independent of the selection committee.

Under the Scheme of Assistance to NSFs, financial assistance is provided to the recognized NSFs for training of athletes, which includes all requisite support for training, participation in international events, conduct of national championships, conduct of international tournaments in India, engagement of foreign coaches/support staff, scientific & medical support etc. The Ministry has recently revised the norms of assistance under this

Scheme on 22.05.2025. The key revisions in the scheme's norms related to increased funding and support for junior athletes are as follows:

- NSFs have been mandated to ensure that at least 20% of their annual budget is earmarked for grassroots development.
- Amount of financial assistance for conduct of national championships up to Rs. 30 lakh each for Senior,

Junior and Sub-Junior/Youth/Cadet are provided for High Priority sports and up to Rs. 25 lakhs for Priority and General disciplines.

- Diet charges have been increased from Rs. 690 to Rs. 1000 per day per athlete for Senior athletes and from Rs. 480 to Rs. 850 per day for Junior athletes.

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

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