

Cabinet approves revamped Khelo India Scheme and enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs)

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The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved an expanded Khelo India Scheme and enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs) with a combined outlay of Rs.36,441 crore for the period 2026–27 to 2030–31, reaffirming the Government's commitment to harnessing the power of sports for youth development and nation-building.

This is the country's most ambitious sports development programme since Independence. The aspirations of the youth of the country towards sports has been given a major boost and will have a transformational impact over the coming decade.

The approved outlay is nearly eight times that of the previous Khelo India Scheme, reflecting the Government's commitment to making sports a cornerstone of youth development, nation-building and India's emergence as a global sporting powerhouse.

The revamped scheme is designed to create a seamless pathway for every talented young Indian—from school playgrounds and village sports fields to the Olympic podium. It seeks to ensure that no sporting talent is left undiscovered because of geography, economic background or lack of opportunity.

Aligned with the vision of Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 and the National Education Policy 2020, the scheme integrates sports with education, fitness, technology and high-performance training while laying a strong foundation for India's long-term sporting ambitions, including the 2030 Commonwealth Games and the country's bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Every talented youth gets a pathway to excellence:

For the first time, a comprehensive athlete development pathway has been created to support young sportspersons at every stage—from talent identification and scientific training to international competition and Olympic preparation.

The scheme establishes an integrated nationwide sports ecosystem comprising National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs), Khelo India Centres of Excellence (KICoEs), SAI Training Centres (STCs), Khelo India Accredited Academies (KIAAs), Khelo India Centres (KICs) and Youth Sports Companies (YSCs) of the Armed Forces. Together, these institutions will provide world-class coaching, sports science support and modern infrastructure across the country.

To strengthen the school sports ecosystem, the Government has introduced two new initiatives—Khelo India Feeder Schools (KIFS) and Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas (KIUV)—which will integrate sports with mainstream education and enable early identification and systematic nurturing of talented children.

India's athlete pool to expand nearly ten-fold:

A major reform under the scheme is the creation of the Emerging Khelo India Athletes (E-KIAs) category alongside the existing Khelo India Athletes programme. This will expand the structured athlete development ecosystem by nearly ten times, bringing thousands of additional young athletes under professional coaching, scientific support and long-term mentoring.

A strengthened nationwide talent identification framework involving Talent Identification Development Committees, Zonal Committees, Talent Scouts, High Performance Directors and High Performance Managers will ensure continuous identification, tracking and development of promising athletes across the country.

The scheme also establishes a clear progression pathway from grassroots competitions to Khelo India, and subsequently to the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), enabling deserving athletes to receive world-class training, international exposure and comprehensive support to compete for medals at the highest level.

More competitions, greater opportunities:

Recognising that sporting excellence depends on regular competition, the revamped scheme significantly strengthens India's domestic competition ecosystem. It supports school, university, regional and sport-specific leagues alongside national championships to provide sustained competitive exposure to young athletes.

Special emphasis has been placed on expanding opportunities for women athletes, para-athletes, indigenous sports, and sports as a tool for peace, inclusion and community development. The scheme also provides support for organising the National Games and hosting major international sporting events in India.

Building a fitter and healthier India:

The Fit India Movement will be significantly expanded to promote fitness as a nationwide movement, particularly among young people. Campaigns will encourage active lifestyles, women's participation in sports, outreach in border and remote areas and sports-based initiatives against substance abuse, reinforcing sports as a vehicle for social transformation.

Investing in coaches, technology and innovation:

Recognising that athletes can excel only with world-class support systems, the Government will establish the National Coach Accreditation Board (NCAB) to standardise coaching qualifications, improve professional standards and strengthen the capacity of coaches and support staff across the country.

The scheme also envisages a unified digital sports platform integrating athlete databases, infrastructure, competitions, coaching resources, talent assessments, funding and Fit India participation. The platform will enable data-driven planning, transparent governance and personalised athlete development.

Stronger partnerships for sporting excellence:

The Government will deepen collaboration with private academies, corporate partners and other institutions to leverage investment, innovation and expertise in sports infrastructure, talent development and athlete support, creating a truly national sports ecosystem driven by both public and private participation.

Supporting India's global sporting ambitions:

To complement the revamped Khelo India Scheme, the Government has also approved a strengthened Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF) Scheme for the period 2026-31. The scheme will support Indian athletes and teams through funding for coaching, sports science, modern equipment,

international exposure, coaching camps, engagement of foreign experts and participation in major international competitions. It will also support sports cooperation with countries of the Global South and promote India's indigenous sports internationally.

A national mission for Viksit Bharat:

The revamped Khelo India Scheme represents one of the largest investments ever made in India's sporting future. More than a sports programme, it is a national mission to empower young Indians with opportunity, confidence and excellence.

By creating a seamless pathway from grassroots talent to global sporting success, the scheme aims to nurture champions, inspire a culture of fitness, strengthen India's sporting ecosystem and position the country among the world's leading sporting nations as it moves towards the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

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