

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
(DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2712
ANSWERED ON 23/02/2023

TRAINING OF ATHLETES FOR THE UPCOMING 2024 AND 2028 OLYMPICS

2712. SHRI P. WILSON:

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether Government has taken steps to train athletes for the upcoming Paris Olympics, 2024 and Los Angeles Olympics, 2028, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether measures are being undertaken to provide financial and infrastructural support to Indian athletes who will compete in the said upcoming Olympics, if so, the funds allocated in this regard, State-wise; and

(c) whether Government will carry out review of the performance of selected junior athletes under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) and if so, the details and outcome thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

[SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR]

(a) & (b): Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, National Sports Federations (NSFs) and Sports Authority of India (SAI) are working in close coordination for Indian teams and sportspersons' preparation for the forthcoming Asian Games, 2022 scheduled to be held from 23rd September to 8th October 2023, and the Paris Olympics, 2024. The Government is providing all requisite support and facilities to the athletes to enable them to do their best in the forthcoming Asian Games and Paris Olympics 2024. "High priority" category has been created to put focus on and incentivize those sports disciplines included in the Olympics in which India has won medals in the last conducted Asian Games as well as Commonwealth Games or in which India has good chance of winning medals. Customized training as per the requirements of individual athletes is being provided under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is providing financial assistance to recognized National Sports Federations (NSFs) 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 Indian and Foreign 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 through the Scheme of financial assistance to NSFs. For the said purpose, an Annual Calendar for Training and Competition (ACTC) budget is approved for each NSF every year. Further, elite Athletes are selected and provided with financial assistance like out of pocket allowance (OPA), equipment support, coaches etc., under the TOPS.

(c): The TOPS, which was started in 2014, is the main scheme for preparation of our elite athletes who are our medal prospects for Olympic Games, Paralympics, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games. The TOPS is a flexible scheme under which support is provided keeping in view the specific requirements of training and equipments of individual athletes. Selection of athletes for inclusion in TOPS is done by the Mission Olympic Cell (MOC), following a rigorous process keeping in view performance of athletes vis-à-vis international benchmarks. Apart from support for customized training, out of pocket allowance @ Rs.50,000 per month is made to each of the athlete included in the TOPS. At present, **98** individual athletes & 2 hockey teams (M&W) as core group have been selected under the scheme.

The Ministry has started the TOPS Developmental Group in October 2019 for preparation of identified young talented sportspersons. To ensure a focused approach in India's Olympic preparation, identification of **165** best sporting talents has been completed. The TOPS Development Group athletes are paid OPA of Rs.**25,000/-** and customized training support at the National Centres of Excellence of SAI.

Addition to and weeding out of athletes from TOPS is an ongoing exercise. Performance review of all athletes included in TOPS is carried out periodically on a regular basis and athletes whose performance is found to be below the set benchmarks are weeded out.
