

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS & SPORTS
(DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS)
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.153
ANSWER ON- 20/07/2023

REFORMS IN WRESTLING FEDERATION OF INDIA

153 DR. JOHN BRITTAS:

Will the MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether several women wrestlers of the country had submitted representations to Government raising accusations of sexual harassment, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether Government took note of the growing demand from several quarters for reforms, ranging from guardians accompanying contestants to demands for more women officials in senior ranks of the Wrestling Federation of India; and
- (c) if so, response of Government thereto?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

(SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR)

(a) Sir, in January 2023, some wrestlers had staged protest/ dharna levelling allegations of sexual harassment, arbitrariness and mismanagement in the functioning of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). As the matter pertained to the wellbeing of the athletes, the Government immediately took note of the allegations and instructed the Executive Committee of WFI to abstain, as an interim measure, from administering and managing the day-to-day activities of the WFI. Further, at present the affairs of WFI, including the selection of athletes and making of entries for participation of sportspersons in international events, are being managed by that Ad hoc Committee constituted by the Indian Olympic Association until such time as the newly elected Executive Committee takes charges.

(b) & (c) National Sports Federations (NSFs) are autonomous bodies registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 / Companies Act, etc. They are responsible and accountable for

the overall management, direction, control, regulation, promotion, development and sponsorship of the discipline for which they are recognized by the concerned International Federation. The Government recognizes NSFs at the national level for promotion and development of sports as per the laid down procedure in the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011 (Sports Code). The Sports Code requires NSFs to follow healthy management practices, accountability, transparency, impartial and transparent selection procedures, age and tenure restrictions of office bearers, basic universal principles of good governance in sports, proper accounting procedures, prevention of age fraud & sexual harassment of women, and holding of elections as per model election guidelines. The Sports Code does not prevent women to be part of the Executive Body of the NSFs.

Further, Sports Authority of India has issued detailed instructions on 15 June 2022 to NSFs to ensure safe and positive environment in sport by making all stakeholders aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behavior consistent with the core values of sportsmanship and appropriate moral conduct. The following measures have also been advised for compliance: -

- a. Woman coach to be a mandatory part of any contingent with female athletes during domestic/international camps and competition exposures.
- b. Compliance Officer to be appointed in all National Coaching Camps and Foreign Exposures for communicating regularly with athletes and others to ensure that the guidelines are being followed as well as enforced as per the Standard Operating Procedure on prevention of sexual harassment in sports and also ensuring reporting of violation to the responsible authorities.
- c. Pre-camp sensitization modules to be designed and presented to all athletes, coaches and support staff together before commencement of any National Coaching Camp and Foreign Exposure.
- d. Increasing the strength of women Coaches/Support Staff in National Coaching Camps by respective NSFs.
