

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

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 162
ANSWERED ON 13.03.2025

SUPPORT FOR ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES

162. SHRI HARBHAJAN SINGH:

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

(a) whether Government has taken any step during the recent years to enhance support for athletes with disabilities, including funding, infrastructure and training programmes, to ensure better participation and performance in international events like Paralympic Games;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details regarding the steps taken, if any, during the recent years regarding training programmes and coaching initiatives to support athletes with disabilities, particularly in the lead-up to major international competitions like the Paralympic Games; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS & SPORTS

(DR. MANSUKH MANDAVIYA)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) IN RESPECT OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 162 FOR REPLY ON 13.03.2025 REGARDING SUPPORT FOR ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES ASKED BY SHRI HARBHAJAN SINGH.

(a) to (d) 'Sports' being a State subject, the responsibility of development of sports, including funding, infrastructure, training programmes and coaching initiatives to support athletes with disabilities to ensure their better participation and performance in international events like Paralympic Games, rests primarily with the respective State/Union Territory Governments. The Union Government only supplements their efforts by bridging critical gaps.

However, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has implemented a range of comprehensive initiatives to support athletes with disabilities, ensuring they receive the necessary resources for training, competition, and international representation. One of the key initiatives is the Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF) Scheme, which provides funding to national federations such as the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI). This funding covers training camps, international exposure, coach salaries, and medical insurance for athletes. Another important program is the Khelo India Scheme, which focuses on grassroots-level athletes and supports 84 para-athletes, including 24 who participated in the Paris 2024 Paralympics. In 2023, the first edition of the Khelo India Para Games was also organized to further boost opportunities for para-athletes at the national level. The Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) offers individualized support to 52 para-athletes who are currently training for the 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics. This scheme provides funding for their training, equipment, and medical support, ensuring they are well-prepared for global competitions.

Cash incentives for top performances at major international events are also a significant part of the support system. Details of the Scheme of Cash Awards to Medal Winners in International Sports Events and their Coaches are available on the website of this Ministry at <https://yas.nic.in/sports/scheme-cash-awards-medal-winners-international-sports-events-and-their-coaches-0>. Athletes with disabilities having significant performance at major international sports events are honoured with various prestigious National Sports Awards. In 2024, 20 para-athletes were recognized for their outstanding achievements.

To further bolster para-sports, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) has developed specialized infrastructure at its regional centres in Gandhinagar, Lucknow, and Bengaluru. These facilities offer comprehensive support, including training, accommodation, medical care, and scientific assistance to athletes with disabilities.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, through the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, has established the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Training Centre for Disability Sports (ABVTCDS) in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. This centre aims to provide specialized training and support for athletes with disabilities, ensuring they have access to world-class facilities and coaching.

Additionally, all sports facilities are mandated to adhere to the guidelines outlined in "Accessible Sports Complex and Residential Facilities for Sports Persons with Disabilities," ensuring the comfort and accessibility of facilities for athletes with disabilities.

These collective efforts by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, along with other governmental bodies, aim to provide para-athletes with the comprehensive support they need to excel on the global stage, promoting inclusivity and excellence in para-sports.
