

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
(DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS)
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3146
ANSWERED ON 27/03/2025

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR ATHLETES

3146 DR. FAUZIA KHAN:

Will the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports be pleased to state:

- (a) whether sports psychologists have been provided for only two out of the 16 sports shortlisted for the Paris Olympics 2024;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether any measures have been taken to train coaches and officials in sensitizing them to the mental health needs of athletes and to promote positive mental well being among Indian sportspersons;
- (d) if so, details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether steps have been taken to integrate sports psychologists within the broader training regime of Indian athletes; and
- (f) details of the measures being implemented to address the mental health and psychological well being of athletes across all sports?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

(DR. MANSUKH MANDAVIYA)

(a) to (b): The Union Government provided financial assistance to Indian Olympic Association for deploying the supporting staff in Paris Olympics 2024. The financial assistance was provided for deployment of sports psychologists for Hockey, Shooting and Archery. Additionally, a medical team was also stationed at the Indian Medical Centre established in the Games Village working on 24x7 basis, catering to the requirements of the Indian Olympic Contingent. Two Psychologists as welfare officers were deployed with the Medical Centre who attended to the requirements of the athletes. Additionally, one sleep therapist was also deployed at the Medical Centre to help the athletes for psychological and physical recovery.

(c) to (d): In order to train coaches and officials in sensitizing them to the mental health needs of athletes, Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous body under the aegis of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, conducts the following courses through its Academic Institutions viz. NIS Patiala and LNCPE Trivandrum:

- i. Diploma in Sports Coaching
- ii. M.Sc Sports Coaching
- iii. Six Week Certificate Course in Sports Coaching
- iv. Post Graduate Diploma in Sports Psychology

These courses have several modules of Sports Psychology, specifically enabling the coaches to meet the mental health needs of athletes and promote positive mental well-being among Indian sportspersons.

(e) to (f): To enhance the integration of sports psychology into the training framework, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports ensures that every National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) is staffed with a designated sports psychologist. These professionals play a pivotal role in providing athletes with mental training to achieve peak performance while also fostering their emotional well-being. Regular mental health assessments and training sessions are conducted by these psychologists at all the centers.

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, through SAI, conducts regular psychological assessments as per the Khelo India Protocol, wherein, an in depth assessment of sports-specific psychological factors is carried out twice a year for the athletes at the centres which are a part of the Khelo India scheme. Regular reports are shared as per the institution data policy. Further, Mental Health sessions as per requirement of athletes and coaches, are conducted for the purpose of psychological counselling and/or personalised training of the athletes. The sessions are decided by consensus with the coach, athlete and psychologist, and reports as per the progress of the athlete are communicated with the athlete and the coach.
