



Indian paddler G Sathiyam working on variations for the Tokyo Olympics

New Delhi: May 7: Indian Table Tennis player Gnanasekaran Sathiyam on Friday said that he is hoping to put on a grand show at the Tokyo Olympic Games late this year and is working on different variations.

“We (coach S Raman and himself) are working on bringing more variation and pace to my game. That is one thing I need to work and handle better on the slow and fast balls. We are also trying a lot of variations in the serve and the receiving and bring in more surprise elements there,” he said at a media interaction facilitated by the Sports Authority of India.

Sathiyam also added that despite the lockdown his training with paddler Anirban Ghosh has been beneficial in keeping the momentum going till the Olympics. “It is always good to have an all-round player in Anirban Ghosh as sparring partner. He can generate a lot of pace to the ball and has a lot of feeling,” he said.

“Anirban has been important as I don’t have to worry about my Olympic preparation. I played really well, sparring with him before the Nationals and the Olympic qualifiers and I went on to win my first-ever National title. I am going to keep that momentum going into the Olympics. We are going into the smallest of details and I think that will make the difference,” Sathiyam said.

Speaking about the Covid-19 pandemic, he said it brought along challenges for everyone. “We all have got used to this new kind of training with closed doors and with lots of experiments. The robot training is still on so to work on my speed, and I also work on my serves and a lot of specifics,” he said.

Sathiyam revealed that he has also ordered the Absolute Double Advanced Table from Japanese table manufacturer San-Ei. “I am trying to get a table that will be used in Tokyo2020 and if things get better, it would definitely be one of the best and intense preparations that I would be making heading for the Olympics.

“That is one of the tables that is never used in other competitions and it makes a huge difference as it's as different as playing in grass and clay court (in tennis). So, it was very important that I get to practice for the Olympics on the table that would be used in the Olympics and it will help me get used to the conditions and perform better,” he said.

Sathiyam has been part of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) since December 2018 and has received nearly Rs. 49 lakhs in financial assistance under the scheme for foreign training, foreign competitions, domestic training, sparring partner and sports equipment and Out of Pocket Allowance.

On July 4, 2019, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) had sanctioned a budget of Rs 12.13 crore to the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) under the Annual Calendar of Training and Competition (ACTC) until September 2020. On April 1 last, in a fresh approval until March 2022, TTFI was approved a budget of Rs 7.77 crore.



Tokyo 2020 would be Sathiyar's first Olympic Games.

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