



Want to take it one day at a time in Tokyo: Sindhu

New Delhi, June 3: Rio 2016 silver medallist PV Sindhu is hoping to take a new set of techniques and skills with her to Tokyo. The world champion badminton player knows that everyone else would be coming up with their own game plans and that is reason enough for her to step up her own efforts with tactics.

Speaking from Hyderabad in a virtual media interaction, facilitated by the Sports Authority on Thursday, Sindhu reiterated that the expectations are palpably high from her at the Tokyo Olympics and it would be a big responsibility for her to live up to them.

As part of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports' Target Olympic Podium Scheme, Sindhu has been given a financial support of Rs 39.5 lakh since 2019 towards participation in international competitions, overseas training, recovery equipment, support staff, out of pocket allowance.

The Sports Ministry also sanctioned a financial assistance of up to Rs 60.2 crore to the Badminton Association of India for the financial years 2019-20 and 2021 through the Annual Calendar for Training and Competition (ACTC) programme.

Excerpts from Thursday's interaction:

On her challengers in Tokyo: You can't take it easy. There are a lot of good players in the circuit, from Tai Tzu-Ying to Ratchanok Intanon. It's unfortunate that Carolina Marin won't be a part of the Games. But, I feel everybody would give their 100 per cent. The thinking process of every player has changed since Rio. There are a lot of tricky players so we have to look out for them and everyone has different styles. I feel I have improved and got a lot of time to focus on my techniques and skills. And you'll hopefully get to see new techniques and skills from me at the Olympics.

On her preparations for Tokyo: For me, it's always one step at a time. I have to focus and give my best. When I started off this year, it wasn't too great for me because of the big gap due to lockdown. But I came back and rectified my mistakes. I played in England and improved on my game. Game-wise I feel I have improved. Attack is my strong point but I'm also focusing a lot on defence. I have to be prepared for all strokes. All in all, I'm looking forward to the Olympic Games.

On how Tokyo will be different from Rio: There is no pressure this time. Yes, 2016 was completely different. Responsibilities are lot more now. In Tokyo, I just want to go out there and give my 100 per cent. I just want to take it day by day. I didn't know the feel and atmosphere last time as it was my first Olympics. But now I know. Responsibilities and expectations are there. Every player will read your game and everyone knows one another's game. I need to go with different plans and strategies. Everybody is going to come with new skills. I'm doing my strength work in Suchitra academy and get a lot of sparring partners from there. There are a lot of facilities in Gachibowli where I'm training now. It is a good international stadium and I'm making sure I get used to those big stadiums before moving to Tokyo.



On coach Park Tae Sang: It's been a year and half since I'm training with Park. He is working on my techniques and skills. We are practicing and improving every day. I'm very thankful he's motivating me all the time. As a coach, he knows what is going on in my head. He has helped me a lot in improving mentally and physically. Experience-wise also I've improved a lot.

On Saina Nehwal not getting the Olympic quota: It would have been good if Saina and Kidambi Srikanth had qualified. It would have been great for the Indian contingent. The BWF guys are trying to make it happen but unfortunately because of the Covid situation, tournaments are getting cancelled. At the end of the day, life comes first. In the Olympics, I'm sure they are following all protocols. Things are getting better about the Covid situation. The Japan Government is really taking care to see the Olympics will happen, that's what I hear. They'll be testing us every single day and we'll be in a bio bubble. Hoping by then cases will be reducing and we all will be fine.

On support from SAI and TOPS: We've been getting all the facilities from the Indian Govt and also following the Covid protocols. I want to thank SAI and TOPS for their constant support. Even in these tough times, we are able to train because of them. It has been very important and for us, we don't have any problem in training and going to different places. The assistance from TOPS is just a phone call away. Kiren Rijiju sir also tells me if you need anything let us know.

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