



Press Release

Indian representatives in Para Table Tennis, Para Powerlifting and Para Taekwondo look to make mark in Tokyo

New Delhi, August 22: Bhavina Patel and Sonalben Patel, both belonging to the State of Gujarat, are looking at putting their best foot forward at the Paralympic Games. The duo is participating at the Para Table Tennis Women's singles Wheelchair Class 4 category and the Women's singles Wheelchair Class 3 category respectively. They are pairing up for the Women's Doubles event as well.

Bhavina and Sonalben start their qualification rounds in Tokyo on the opening day, i.e, August 25. The qualifying rounds are scheduled for August 25, 26 and 27, while the semi-final and the final are scheduled for August 28 and 29 respectively.

The duo has been training under Coach Lalan Doshi at the Blind People's Association in Ahmedabad. While Bhavina is ranked 8 in the World currently in her category, Sonalben is ranked 19th. Both have been recipients of the Sardar Patel Award and the Eklavya Awards and have been a medallist at the Asian Games.

They are a part of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) Core group and have both received key interventions from the Government of India in terms of participation in international competitions. Bhavina has also received financial assistance towards procuring TT tables, Robot and TT Wheelchair for personal training, assistance towards Physiotherapy, Dietician, psychologist & coaching fees to prepare for the upcoming Tokyo Paralympic Games as well as Sports specific equipments such as Table Tennis balls, ply, rubber, glue etc for training.

Following in the footsteps of her elder sisters from Para TT would be Aruna Tanwar, the 21-year-old sole Para Taekwondo representative at the Paralympic Games from India. Haryana-based Aruna will participate in the Women's under 49kg K44 category. She will be in action on September 2 from the round-of-16 rounds.

Aruna, currently ranked 30th in the K44 category, is a silver medalist at the Asian Para Taekwondo Championship in Vietnam in 2018 as well as a bronze medalist at the World Para Taekwondo Championship in Turkey in 2019. She is a part of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) and has also received financial assistance in procurement of sports-specific equipments.



In Para Powerlifting, India is sending two of the best in Jai Deep and Sakina Khatun. While Sakina, born in West Bengal, has been training at the SAI National Center of Excellence in Bangalore, Haryana-based Jai Deep has been training at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Rohtak. Both are a part of the TOPS Core team.

Sakina, who will participate in the women's up to 50kg category, is the only Indian woman paralympian to ever win a Commonwealth Games medal when she won back in 2014 in Glasgow. She is also a Para Asian Games 2018 silver medalist. Sakina's impairment is a result of the effects of contracting polio as a baby. Post her matriculation, she started powerlifting training in 2010 with financial support from Dilip Majumdar and her current coach, Farman Basha.

Jai Deep, who is participating at the Men's up to 65kg category, is an assistant coach in the Sports Authority of India. Both have received key Government of India interventions in terms of participation in over three International Competitions and participation in National Coaching Camps with sports science support along with sports kit. They will both be in action in Tokyo in their respective final rounds on August 27.

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