



Press Release

Rio Paralympics Gold Medallist Mariyappan leads the way to Tokyo 2020

19th August, New Delhi: India sent its first batch of Paralympians to Tokyo Paralympics with just days left for the global event to begin.

The first batch of the contingent left for Tokyo late Tuesday night and comprised of nine members including 3 para-athletes and 6 support staff.

The team was led by Rio Paralympics Gold medallist Mariyappan Thangavelu, who is also India's flag bearer for the Tokyo Paralympics. He along with Discus thrower Vinod Kumar and Men's Javelin thrower Tek Chand will reach Tokyo on 19th August 2021.

Before they left for Tokyo, the contingent was given a send-off by the members of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport.

On August 18th, the Indian contingent also interacted with the Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi via video conference where he had praised the para-athletes for overcoming so many obstacles in life and had said, "we have to keep on improving our ways and system to develop a sports culture in India, shed fears of earlier generations."

Thanking the honourable Prime Minister for his interaction with the Tokyo Paralympics contingent, President of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) Mrs Deepa Malik said "I am grateful to Prime Minister for the cheerful send-off this morning, he has motivated the athletes who are leaving for Tokyo and filled them with warmth and joy. I would also like to thank the Sports Ministry, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and the federations for their continued support, especially during this tough time of the COVID 19 pandemic when we didn't know what will happen and if the Tokyo Paralympics will take place or not. Without their constant help and support, we would not have been able to help the athletes train during the tough times and get them ready for the global event. I am sure the athletes will do their absolute best to keep the Indian flag flying high at Tokyo Paralympics."

India is sending its largest-ever contingent to Tokyo Paralympics with 54 athletes who are set to compete in 9 sport disciplines. The mega event will kick off on 24th August 2021 and will go on till 5th September 2021.



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