



## Press Release

### **Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur felicitates para athletes, hopes Javelin will become as popular as Cricket bat**

**New Delhi, Sept 3:** Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Anurag Singh Thakur today expressed hope that the Javelin will become as popular in India as the Cricket bat. He was interacting with four Paralympic Games medallists, including F64 winner Sumit Antil, at a felicitation ceremony.

Shri Thakur was referring to the four Javelin Throw medals won by Indian in the Paralympic Games in the wake of Neeraj Chopra's historic gold medal in the Olympic Games. "I hope Javelin in India will now become as famous as a cricket bat," he said while felicitating four athletes who returned this morning after winning medals in the Paralympic Games.

The athletes who the Minister in his office included Devendra Jhajharia (Javelin Throw F46 Silver Medal), Yogesh Kathuniya (Discus Throw F56 Silver Medal) and Sharad Kumar (High Jump T63 Bronze medal).

"On National Sports Day, India clinched four medals and there can't be a better tribute than this to Major Dhyan Chand ji. There is a lot of hard work by the athletes combined with the support given by Government to the National Sports Federation and athletes. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's encouragement has been a driving force," Shri Thakur said.

"Government will improve the sports ecosystem in country and through schemes like TOPS, it will keep supporting the athletes (both core and development) in an unprecedented way," he said. Minister of State, Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Nisith Pramanik and Ministry officials were also present.

Devendra Jhajharia and Sharad Kumar spoke of the support provided by the Government in their Paralympic Games campaign. "In the last four years, Government has supported us in a great way. PM Modi Ji's interaction with us also boosted our morale and we felt motivated this time," Jhajharia said.

"This was a very difficult Paralympics because we did not know whether Games will happen or not. We are very happy that Government adopted us and offered us great support through Target



Olympic Podium Scheme. The Government is working tirelessly to support us and all our sports-centric and reasonable requests are being approved quickly," Sharad Kumar said.

"The Prime Minister's call to every athlete after their respective events is also unprecedented and many of our international contemporary competitors are in awe of such a gesture", sharad added.

**EOM**