



Press Release

With eye on better performances in Olympics 2024, 2028, Union Sports Minister announces restructuring of SAI's workforce with thrust on sports science and performance management

New Delhi, September 28: Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Anurag Singh Thakur on Tuesday, September 28th, 2021 chaired the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) 55th Governing Body Meeting, his first, since taking over the Sports Ministry earlier this year.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State (MoS) Shri Nisith Pramanik and members of the Governing Body including IOA General Secretary Shri. Rajeev Mehta, prominent ex-athletes Bhaichug Bhutia, Akhil Kumar, Trupti Murgunde, Kamlesh Mehta, among others and senior members of the Sports Ministry, SAI, and saw various key decisions being taken. The primary announcement made by Shri. Thakur is the restructuring of SAI's workforce with focus on sports science and performance management. Decisions to give out-of-turn promotions for SAI Coaches and partnership with corporate India to strengthen existing facilities for athletes through CSR initiatives and direct funding, were also approved at the meeting.

The restructuring of SAI workforce and the Target Olympic Podium Scheme Secretariat aims at strengthening the existing support system provided to sportspersons so they can excel at international competitions, especially the Olympics and Paralympics. Speaking about the changes that the restructuring will bring about, Shri. Thakur said, "Our emphasis is on sports science and performance management and with the restructuring SAI will hire around 300 more scientific staff including 138 High performance analysts, 23 high performance directors, 23 sports medicine doctors, 93 physiotherapists and 104 masseurs. Further posts have been created for 50 High Performance Coaches at the NCOEs for targeted performance at international events, especially the Olympics." The restructuring will also create positions for strength and conditioning experts, performance analysts, biomechanists, psychologists, video analysts, physiologists, thereby giving athletes a holistic training opportunity.

It was also decided that a number of new departments, including sports development, partnerships, policy and learning, will be inducted into TOPS for a 360 approach towards providing personalised support to elite athletes.

The members of the Governing Body also acknowledged the performance of the athletes at the recently-concluded Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics and approved the proposal to give out-of-turn promotions to five SAI Coaches, four of them current athletes, as a token of appreciation. Among those promoted are hockey player Savita Punia, who has been promoted from assistant coach to



coach, Indian Hockey team captain Rani, who has been promoted from Coach to Senior Coach, Hockey Coach Piyush Dubey has also been promoted from coach to senior coach of the men's hockey team. Paralympian High Jumper Mariyyapan T has been promoted from Senior Coach to Chief Coach and Sharad Kumar has been promoted from Assistant Coach to Coach.

At the GB it was also discussed that the Sports Ministry will take on more partnership initiatives with the corporate sector and private organizations to build India's sports ecosystem. SAI is already working with private entities like Glen Mark Foundation and Inspire Institute of Sport to develop specific sports and it has been decided to forge such partnerships that can benefit athletes, while also giving corporates a chance to be part of the management of sports facilities.

The Sports Ministry aims to partner with corporates for support in specific sports disciplines at various NCOEs for coaching, sports science, diet. equipment, among others. Speaking about this decision, Shri. Thakur said, "I urge individuals, institutions and corporates to come forward to support the mission of making India a sporting powerhouse through CSR initiatives or direct funding."

EOM