



I stay positive and motivated when training goes well: Neeraj Chopra

New Delhi, May 12: Javelin Thrower Neeraj Chopra has retained his sharp focus on doing his best in his maiden Olympic Games, despite the tough challenges presented by the pandemic. The lack of international competitions hurts the National Record holder but he is staying highly motivated.

“I have the maximum focus and am training hard amid the uncertain times,” Neeraj Chopra said in a media conference facilitated by the Sports Authority of India. “If I am training well, I can automatically stay positive and motivate myself. I also focus on my recovery and diet. Of course, news of Covid-19 spread in our country affects the mind but I’ve stopped watching and reading news now. I’m placing sharp focus on preparing for Olympics.”

The Covid-19 related travel restrictions have made it hard for him to participate in international competitions. “I need an international competition before my first Olympics. The confidence level needs to be 100 per cent,” Neeraj Chopra said, adding, “I am training well in Patiala but an international meet is always an added advantage. I have spoken with my team and have zeroed in on Sweden or Finland as our training base. The competitive levels there is better.”

He is aware he will face tough competition in Tokyo but is prepared well for that. “The current group of Javelin Throwers in the world is the best. Each of them are throwing above 87 or 88m. I feel my consistency is fine so far. I’ve been throwing above 85m. I feel my training has brought me closer to throwing 90m. My preparations are getting better to get close to the 90m mark but of course, it will depend what happens on the D-Day in Tokyo,” he said.

“I feel happy that people have high expectations from me. But I shouldn’t take this as pressure and not think of anything that affects my mind. I don’t know if I will win a medal but I will keep no stone unturned in my effort. My body goes automatically in a different zone during the competition and I get that strength to give my best performance,” Neeraj Chopra added.

He was inducted into the Target Olympic Podium Scheme in November 2018 and has received a total of Rs 31.42 lakh so far towards Sports Science equipment, sports gear, out of pocket allowance etc. Besides, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has sanctioned an ACTC budget of 32.53 crore to the Athletics Federation of India during 2020-21.

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