

Press Release

Kiren Rijju to hold 2-day video conference with Ministers of Youth Affairs and Sports of all states, UTs

New Delhi, July 12, 2020: Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri. Kiren Rijju will be meeting ministers in charge of the department of Youth Affairs and Sports from all states and union territories, in a two-day video conference on July 14 and July 15, to chart out the roadmap for grassroot-level sports development as well as the activities of Nehu Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Service Scheme (NSS), across the country.

Speaking about the decision to hold this meeting, Shri. Rijju said, "The country is in the second phase of unlock now and it is important to have a dialogue with the states to align the way forward for sports and youth related activities. During the lockdown, activities of both youth affairs and sports have continued in keeping with the larger goals that have been set. Our NYKS and NSS volunteers have worked relentlessly alongside civil bodies to help in the fight against Covid 19. About 75 lakh volunteers across India have been involved in creating awareness about safety and health guidelines, distribution of masks, helping the elderly among many other things. Their contribution in this fight against the pandemic has won them praise from various state governments. In sports too, despite closure of on-field training, online training has been conducted for athletes of all levels as well as for coaches, so that athletes and coaches could remain close to the sport. We want to assess the impact of all these activities and also plan the way forward, in collaboration with the states."

The agenda of the meeting includes review of action taken during Covid 19, as well as discussions on restarting sporting activities at the state-level and identification of budding sports talent through competitions at block and district levels in states and UTs. Inclusion of fitness and sports as part of the curriculum in all schools across the country will also be discussed. Plans to conduct Khelo India events and Youth Festivals later this year or early next year will be decided.

"Strengthening of the sports ecosystem at the grassroot level is crucial if we want to realise the dream of making India one of the Top 10 countries at the Olympic podium in 2028, and we must start that process now. The Sports Ministry has already decided to set up Khelo India State Center of Excellence (KISCE) in all states and UTs. Further, 1000 Khelo India Centers (KIC) at the district level to enable local talent to be identified and trained in 14 identified Olympic sport and traditional sports. Both the KISCEs and KICs will strengthen the grassroot-level sports ecosystem in India in a big way, and states have a big role to play in it. Also, the One State, One Sport policy that the government has made needs to be discussed and implemented early. We hope to exchange ideas with all states to ensure that there is one collaborative roadmap towards making India a sporting superpower," Shri. Rijju added.

The states have been divided into two groups over the two days to allow every state time to discuss the various issues at the meeting.