

Press Release:

Kiren Rijiju calls upon corporates, PSUs to be stakeholders in India's sporting dream; SBI contributes Rs.5 crore to National Sports Development Fund for Olympic-bound athletes

New Delhi, January 8: Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri. Kiren Rijiju has urged corporate India and leading Public Sector Units to come forward to contribute to the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) as part of their corporate social responsibility, in a bid to strengthen the sports ecosystem of the country, and to be stakeholders in India's journey towards becoming a sports powerhouse.

Among the first to chip in to this contributory fund this year, is the State Bank of India, which has made a contribution of Rs. 5 crores to NSDF on Friday, January 8, with the primary aim of meeting the needs and requirements of elite athletes supported under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).

Speaking about the initiative, SBI Chairman, Shri. Dinesh Khara, who presented the cheque of Rs 5 crore to the Sports Minister said, "It is a matter of great pride for SBI to be able to contribute towards the support of elite athletes under the TOPS Scheme in the year of Olympics. This year our athletes will be competing at the world stage, and as a responsible corporate citizen we feel it is our duty to strengthen them in every way possible."

The total contribution made by corporates, PSUs and individuals to NSDF is matched equally by the Government of India and the fund is used in to promote sports in general and specific sports disciplines for achieving excellence at the national and international level, as well as to impart special training and coaching in relevant sports disciplines to sportspersons, coaches and sports specialists.

Speaking at the event, Shri. Rijiju said, "I thank SBI for its generous contribution and assure the team that every penny will be used wisely to strengthen the journey of our Olympic-bound athletes this year. I also take this opportunity to appeal to all PSUs, corporates and individuals to come forward and contribute to the NSDF and be stakeholders in India's journey to becoming a sporting powerhouse. The government is doing all it can to create a robust sporting ecosystem. However, its efforts need to be amplified by corporates, individuals, PSUs and every Indian. We need to work as a team so as to realise India's long term dream of being among the Top 10 nations in the 2028 Olympics. These voluntary contributions will ensure that an equal amount is matched by the Finance Ministry and the fund can be used judiciously in supporting our athletes."

Currently 105 athletes have been selected in the TOPS core group for the 2021 Olympics in the disciplines of Athletics, Wrestling, Weightlifting, Shooting, Tennis, Table Tennis, Badminton, Para-Athletics, Para-Badminton, Para-Shooting, Archery and Boxing, the funding through NSDF to TOPS will be used for the training of Olympic-bound athletes.

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