



Olympic silver medalist Mathias Boe to coach badminton players Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty

New Delhi, January 29: The Target Olympic Podium Scheme has approved the request of India's badminton players Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, ranked World No. 10 in men's doubles to rope in 2012 Olympic Games doubles finalist Mathias Boe of Denmark to train them in the run up to the the Olympic Games in Tokyo later this year. Chirag Shetty has expressed delight that the Mission Olympic Cell today approved their idea.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty are currently ninth in the Race to Tokyo with 16 pairs eligible. During his tenure, Boe will also help the other doubles team supported under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme i.e. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Ashwini Ponnappa and Ashwini Ponnappa-Sikki Reddy.

Boe has a distinguished doubles career, in which he also won the All-England Championships twice in 2011 and 2015 and was a silver medalist at the 2013 World Championships. Chirag Shetty, who has partnered Boe in some events in the past and trained with him in Mumbai when the Badminton Tour was suspended, mooted the idea of bringing Boe on board.

"I have played with him and he is a mentor, having guided me earlier. Working with him will definitely help us in the Olympic year," Chirag Shetty said. "Boe and Carsten Mogenson (doubles partner) have a great record in closing out tight matches. Getting to work with Boe will give us a huge psychological boost."

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, who recovered from Covid-19, in August last, is very happy with the appointment. "We were confident when we played our second tournament in Bangkok. We are fit and we have the fire in us but we need to do much better mentally. Boe's appointment will help us win tight matches," he said.

Though the pair is well placed to qualify for the Olympics, strong results in the remaining qualification tournaments will improve its ranking and secure a top eight place. The Indians returned to competitive badminton this month after a year. The pair had a breakthrough season in 2019 when it won the Thailand Open Super 500 and was runner-up at the French Open 750.

Before Boe's appointment as their coach, the Target Olympic Podium Scheme had allocated Rs. 25.54 lakh each for the players since 2016.