

Our para athletes are our strength says Kiren Rijiju; Devendra Jhajharia thanks government for para-friendly sporting infrastructure

December 3 , New Delhi: Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports Shri Kiren Rijiju attended a virtual session on the occasion of 29th World Disability Day on Thursday in the presence of Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) President Deepa Malik, revered Indian Para Athletes Devendra Jhajharia, Parul Parmar and Shatabdi Awasthi, Secretary General, PCI Shri Gursharan Singh and Chief Patron, PCI Shri Avinash Rai Khanna.

Shri Rijiju mentioned that the Para Athletes are the strength and the source of inspiration for everyone in the country and the Sports Ministry is leaving no stone unturned to support them. "Our Para Athletes and 'Divyang' warriors are our strength. They give us inspiration. In our Sports Ministry, there is no difference between an able and a differently-abled sportsperson. We felicitate them with the same amount of recognition, prize money and so on," the Sports Minister said.

Shri Rijiju also added that he will request the State Governments to support the Paralympians in their respective region in the best possible way. "I will request the respective State Governments to have a policy for the 'Divyang' warriors like the Central Government has contributed, to support the Paralympians in the best way possible, from financial to coaching and training facilities to proper livelihood and so on. The Government, the PCI and everyone are a team and we need to carry on our work of supporting our Para Athletes."

Padma Shri, Khel Ratna and Arjuna Awardee Devendra Jhajharia thanked the Government for their immense contribution in always helping the Para Athletes in a swift manner. "Whenever we send a mail to the Government stating our problems or things we need, we get a reply within an hour. I look at most training centres across India and feel so happy that the next generation of Para Athletes will have no problem as the infrastructure and facilities are already in place. We cannot be more thankful to the Government and especially our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi who has asked everyone not to call us 'Viklang', but 'Divyang'. This has been an immense motivation booster for all of us," Jhajharia said.

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