



## **Sports Ministry approaches UK Government to allow Sania Mirza's 2-year-old son to accompany her during UK tour**

**New Delhi, May 19, 2021:** The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has approached the UK Government, through the Ministry of External Affairs of Government of India, to grant visa to the two-year-old son of ace tennis player Sania Mirza, so that she can take the toddler with her while she participates in a series of competitions in the United Kingdom, ahead of the Tokyo Olympics.

Sania will be participating in the Nottingham Open on 6th June followed by the Birmingham Open on 14th June, the Eastbourne Open on 20th June, followed by the Wimbledon Grand Slam on 28th June. Though Sania has been granted a visa to travel to Nottingham, her son and his caretaker have not received UK visas owing to the travel restrictions on Indian travellers.

Sania, who is a part of the Sports Ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), approached the Ministry requesting for help with the visa of her son and his caretaker. Sania stated that she cannot leave a two-year-old child behind as she travels for a month.

The request was immediately taken up by the Sports Ministry and a letter has already been sent to MEA requesting them to take up the matter in the UK through the Indian Embassy in London.

Speaking about the endeavour of the Ministry, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Kiren Rijiju said, "We received this request for Sania a few days back, and I felt that it is important that as a mother Sania be allowed to take her two-year-old son along so that she can participate with a free mind without worrying for her child back home. I have approved the request and Sports Ministry officials have initiated the process with the MEA. The Sports Ministry's effort has always been to provide every support to our athletes. We are hopeful that the UK Government will see merit in this case and allow the child to travel with Sania."

**EOM**