

Sports Authority of India

Press Release

29 athletes included under TOPS scheme in shooting, table tennis and tennis in preparation for 2020 Tokyo Olympics

New Delhi, December 13: The Sports Authority of India's Mission Olympic Cell approved the names of 29 athletes to be included in its Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) in the disciplines of shooting, tennis and table tennis. The performance of potential athletes was reviewed in the context of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. It was also decided to extend support towards a specific developmental group for the 2024 Olympics. The meeting was chaired by DG, SAI, Neelam Kapur and attended by representatives of various federations.

The list of approved athletes is as under:

Shooting:

1. Ravi Kumar: Men's 10m Air Rifle
2. Deepak Kumar: Men's 10m Air Rifle
3. Apurvi Chandela: Women's 10m Air Rifle
4. Elavenil Valarivan: Women's 10m Air Rifle
5. Mehuli Ghosh: Women's 10m Air Rifle
6. Anjum Moudgil: Women's 10m Air Rifle and Women's 50m Rifle 3 Position
7. Sanjeev Rajput: Men's 50m Rifle 3 Position
8. Abhishek Verma: Men's 10m Air Pistol
9. Saurabh Chaudhary: Men's 10m Air Pistol
10. Om Prakash Mitharwal: Men's 10m Air Pistol
11. Manu Bhaker: Women's 10m Air Pistol and 25m Pistol
12. Anish Bhanwala: Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol
13. Rahi Sarnobat: Women's 25m Pistol

14. Kynan Chenai: Men's Trap

15. Lakshay Sheoran: Men's Trap

16. Angad Veer Singh Bajwa: Men's Skeet

Additionally, the following shooters were being considered under the development group for the 2024 Olympics:

Hriday Hazarika (Men's 10m Air Rifle), Divyansh Panwar (Men's 10m Air Rifle), Shreya Agrawal (Women's 10m Air Rifle), Aishwarya Pratap Tomar (Men's 50m Rifle 3 Position), Esha Singh (Women's 10m Air Pistol), Manisha Keer (Women's Trap)

There was an intense deliberation over the inclusion of Heena Sidhu and Jitu Rai in the scheme. The committee post the discussion agreed to keep them on a watchlist along with a few other athletes, and it was decided to take a call on their inclusion in the scheme, post the World Cup in February 2019 to be held in New Delhi.

Tennis:

Based on the minimum qualifying ranking criteria which will be applicable for the 2020 Olympics, the following two players were selected in TOPS.

Divij Sharan and Rohan Bopanna (Men's doubles)

The committee also decided that Sania Mirza could be considered for inclusion at a later date for Mixed Doubles depending on her plans to recommence training.

Table Tennis:

The following athletes were selected under TOPS based on the minimum qualifying ranking criteria for the Olympics.

1. Achanta Sharath Kamal (Men's)

2. Sathiyar Gnanasekaran (Men's)

3. Manika Batra (Women's)

Manika Batra's selection has primarily been done on her recent performances with Achanta Sharath Kamal in Mixed Doubles.

In addition, Manav Thakkar and Archana Kamath were selected under the developmental group for the 2024 Olympics.

The athletes were chosen after a detailed analysis to ensure the best possible prospects are identified, in consultation with the National Sports Federations. The review was undertaken on the following parameters:

- Global performance trends from most recent Olympic Games, World Cups and World Championships
- Performance of competing international counterparts (athletes) in the last three years
- High performance age of a typical Olympic medalist specific to each event
- Performance of Indian athletes in 2016, 2017 and 2018 and their progression chart
- Feedback from NSF, National Observers, High Performance Managers, Project Officers and Coaches, wherever applicable

II. The following financial proposal was also cleared at the meeting.

Wrestling: An amount of Rs. 8.75 lakhs was sanctioned for 25 days of training for Bajrang Punia in Georgia ahead of the Asian Championships along with his coach, fitness trainer and sparring partner. This amount includes boarding and lodging and air travel, visa and medical expenses.

The Target Olympic Podium Scheme is a flagship program of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports which is a scheme to provide assistance to India's top athletes.

The selection process is ongoing and athletes from more sports will be added in the coming weeks.