

Legends, celebrities back Fit India Movement; Join Kiren Rijju for Second Fit India Dialogue

27th December 2020, New Delhi: After the superhit first edition of the Fit India Dialogue hosted by Honourable PM, Shri. Narendra Modi in September, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri. Kiren Rijju on Sunday, December 27th anchored the second edition of the Fit India Dialogue where he interacted with fitness sports icons - legendary Milkha Singh, Bollywood superstar Anil Kapoor, Indian cricketer and ODI captain Mithali Raj, former Indian footballer Bhaichung Bhutia and Indian national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand.

During the dialogue, Rijju and the panellists discussed many aspects of sports in India, including how athletes attitude towards fitness has changed over the decades.

Talking about his fitness mantra, 91-year-old Milkha Singh said that the reason he has been able to remain fit all these years is that he never stuffs himself with food and exercise regularly.

"One's health is linked to their gut so one needs to take extra care of their digestive system and their diet. Even at this age, I make sure that I walk and jump regularly so that my digestive system remains strong and I remain fit" he said.

Echoing his thoughts, former Indian footballer Bhaichung Bhutia said "People say Indian players are unfit, but I don't believe that say fitness is something that you can always work for and gain and reach the top level. So I urge the parents to send their children out to play. The children can become professional players in the future, and even if they don't they will remain physically fit."

Indian ODI captain Mithali Raj also added that players and India's perception about fitness have changed in the past few decades.

"When I started playing cricket in the 90s they paid more attention to skills than fitness, but that has changed a lot as we started playing more matches. We realised that strength training, endurance and agility are equally important and we got more and more educated about it as time and game of cricket progressed."

Bollywood superstar echoed her thoughts and said during lockdown he even increased time spent towards exercise so he can work towards building his body.

"I decided to work towards toning my body and mind and increased my exercise routine to twice a day from just once a day and worked towards everything from cardio to yoga and even weights... It was always my wish to be able to flaunt my body and take my shirt off as other actors do and this lockdown I finally got that opportunity."

Indian national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand also shared his lockdown tales and said that he regularly does Surya Namaskar to stay fit and this lockdown even cleaned his house and did "pocha" (mopping) to help his wife out.

"This is the first time that the PM of our country is constantly talking about fitness and yoga, and it is coming directly from the highest office. Initiatives like Khelo India and Fit India is really important and we need them to bring India back on track with regards to physical literacy and such dialogues really help spread that message."

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