

Press Release

We have to improve our level in swimming if we want to be in Top 10 in Olympic 2028: Kiren Rijju

New Delhi, April 30: Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri. Kiren Rijju, feels that India can pick up a far larger number of medals in the Olympics if it produces more world-class swimmers and makes efforts to improve the level of professional and competitive swimming in the country. Addressing swimming coaches from across India who participated in an online knowledge enhancement workshop organised jointly by the Sports Authority of India and the Swimming Federation of India, the Sports Minister said, "Historically, the top countries in the Olympics have bagged a large number of medals in swimming. In the last five Olympics USA has won about 31 per cent of their total medals in swimming. There is a great opportunity for any country because of the sheer number of events that take place in aquatics. Today, we don't stand anywhere in swimming at the Olympic level but there is a huge potential in the sport if we act with dedication, proper planning and adequate resources."

Pointing out how swimmers from Asian countries such as China and Japan have been giving a tough competition to Americans, Europeans and Australians, the Sports Minister said that genetically India is well-equipped to master the sport. "I don't see any reason why India should lag behind. In the 2021 Olympics we do not have the strength to win medals in swimming, but we can start preparing for the 2028 Olympics," he said.

A roadmap to take the preparations forward and also to scout for new talent will be created soon. "I urge the Swimming Federation to make a realistic roadmap listing out need for coaches, infrastructure and training facilities. Once the lockdown is lifted and we are successful in our fight against Covid19, I would like to meet prominent coaches and swimmers of the country and understand from them what we need to make a mark in swimming. There are some facilities that are world-class, the facility of JSW and the Army Institute in Pune which are very good, but we need many more such private academies to come forward to create more facilities," he said.

SAI has been organising online knowledge enhancement workshops for coaches in 24 disciplines and everyday about 10,000 coaches participate across all disciplines in sessions that are taken by experts in India and abroad.

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