

Sports Ministry plans 4-year contract for foreign and Indian coaches, IOA President lauds the move

New Delhi, July 2, 2020: With the Government's focus on the 2024 and 2028 Olympics, and to ensure Olympic-bound athletes are able to train consistently with one coach and therefore work on improving their performance, the Sports Ministry has decided to draw up four year contracts for foreign and Indian coaches in alignment with the Olympic cycle.

Speaking about the decision, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri. Kiren Rijiju said, "Coaches are the backbone of the sporting ecosystem of any country and ensuring the right coaching for our elite athletes is a vital step towards improving India's chances in all major international tournaments, including the Olympics. This decision is part of India's long-term roadmap for Olympic preparation for 2024 and 2028. I am confident our athletes will benefit from this."

The 4-year contract of coaches will be given on the basis of the performance of a coach and recommendation from the respective NSFs. The contracts, though for 4 years, will be reviewed annually and extended on the basis of a coach's overall performance, indicated by the performance of athletes in major international events.

Reacting to the decision of the Government, Dr. Narinder Dhruv Batra, President, Indian Olympic Association, said, "I welcome this decision and thank the Honourable Sports Minister, Ministry and SAI. At a recent meeting with the Honourable Sports Minister, representatives of various NSFs had raised this issue and requested for longer contract periods for foreign coaches. This decision will help athletes in a big way, especially during this time when they have had to go on a forced break for a few months. The existing coaches know these athletes and will build them up." Dr Batra further added, "Frequent changing of coaches means that an athlete has to adjust to the temperament of the new coach and vice-versa. This often hampers the level of performance. This decision is also sure to have a positive impact on the Asian Games in 2022 and the World Championships that we have in 2023, leading up to the Olympics in 2024. The continuity of coaches will surely improve the performance of athletes and ensure more medals for India."

Meanwhile, in view of the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics to next year, the contract of all foreign coaches will be extended till September 30, 2021.

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