



Fitter and determined Mirabai Chanu wants to give India a medal in Tokyo

New Delhi, April 29: Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu has her sights set on winning a medal at the Tokyo Olympic Games later this year. After the heartbreak in Rio in 2016, she now wants to go the distance and secure a medal for India, riding on better fitness than before and the hunger to do well.

"I want to get a medal for India. I'm ready to fight with athletes from all countries, including China. Since Rio, I have evolved a lot, I have worked very hard to be more perfect with my technique, especially in clean and jerk. I have benefit from training in the United States," Mirabai Chanu said during an online press conference, facilitated by the Sports Authority of India.

India's top weightlifter, a World Champion, thanked the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports' Target Olympic Podium Scheme for approving her trip to the US where she worked with a physiotherapist Dr. Aaron Horschig to address her lower back issues.

"TOPS helped me in getting to work with him in USA. My training methods have changed and I have got better. He makes me do a lot of rehabilitation exercises, not just for my shoulder and back issues. It helped me focus on various movements," she said.

Mirabai Chanu was inducted into TOPS in November 2018 and she has received a total funding of Rs 51.51 lakhs towards out-of-pocket allowance, equipment and training support, participation in international competitions, sports science assistance and more. Besides that, the Ministry has sanctioned Rs 21.18 crores to the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF) from 2019 to 2021 towards the Annual Competition and Training Calendar (ACTC).

With pressure off her shoulders, Mirabai Chanu now motivates herself to get better in the weeks before the Olympics. "I want to return to US for training and also improve certain aspects of my game. I'm totally fit now and there are no injuries at all. When I used to get injuries, I got demoralised and often asked myself why it happens to me. But I have stopped thinking about it. All I focus is on recovery, talk with my coaches and discuss the next steps."

"I also watch my own videos to motivate myself and play basketball, handball and volleyball when I get time. In the weekends, I listen to music. I'm in a good frame of mind now!" Mirabai Chanu said.