



## Press Release

New Delhi: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**Dharmendra Pradhan, Anurag Singh Thakur, Nishith Pramanik interact with athletes and fitness icons on National Sports Day; 26 elite athletes visit schools across India**

**Strap: Dharmendra Pradhan says new curriculum aimed at including sports at all levels of education being created to ensure equal weightage to sports and academics**

**New Delhi, August 29th:** To mark the countrywide celebrations of the National Sports Day today, Honourable Union Minister of Education and Skill Development Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan, Honourable Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Shri. Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State for Home Affairs and Sports Shri. Nishith Pramanik interacted with athletes and fitness icons. Speaking at the programme Shri. Pradhan said, "Today on the occasion of the National Sports Day I would like to share that work is already on to execute the vision of Honourable Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi, to make sports an integral part of the New Education Policy. New books are being written to include sports into the curriculum right from the primary level to the highest level of education available in the country. I have written to Shri. Anurag Singh Thakur for inputs from the sports and youth affairs ministry on the important things that should be included in these books on sports and youth-related subjects." Speaking of the credit system that is being considered for youngsters who want to take up sports as a full-time career Shri. Pradhan said, "Youngsters who take up sports full time will not need to attend classes. The amount spent by them on the field, training and competing, will be considered in their grades."

Adding to this, Shri. Thakur said, "The time has come to make India a sports hub and a sports superpower, as envisioned by our Honourable PM. The results being shown by our athletes at various international competitions as well as the support that is being extended by the government through its various schemes like Khelo India and TOPS for requirements like equipment, diet, training, foreign exposures, is only poised to improve. I believe if we work together we can make India the sports superpower that it deserves to be."

CWG 2022 Gold medalist boxer Nikhat Zareen, CWG 2022 Gold medalist para-TT player Bhavina Patel, ex-wrestler and motivational speaker Sangram Singh and holistic lifestyle and diet expert Luke Coutinho were also on the panel. Speaking about what it means to be an athlete in present-day India, Nikhat said, "I am supported under the TOPS programme which funds everything that I need in my sports training. Therefore, I do not have to worry about how I will fund my next competition, training or equipment and that helps me focus on my game, which every athlete needs to do to



reach the highest level of success. Today, we have that support and it is a great time to be an athlete in India."

The programme also witnessed the announcement of the launch of the 2nd Fit India School Quiz, which saw massive success in the first edition. The registration of schools for the second edition opens on September 3, 2022 till October 15, 2022. The quiz carries a total prize money of Rs 3.25 crores.

It was for the first time this year that the National Sports Day was celebrated across the country by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports as a mega sports festival with 26 elite athletes visiting 26 schools across the country, from Jammu to Trivandrum, to create awareness among students on the three important aspects of sports, fitness and balanced diet or Santulit Ahar. The initiative, envisioned by Honourable Prime Minister, has proved to be a catalyst in motivating students to keep healthy, stay fit and eat right. Indian hockey captain Manpreet Singh, boxer Nikhat Zareen, Judoka Tulika Mann, Long jumper Sreeshankar Murali, CWG Lawn Bowls gold medal winners Lovely Chaubey and her team, were among some of the athletes who visited the schools.

The Sports Authority of India also celebrated this year's National Sports Day, as part of the FIT INDIA campaign, through pan-India sports events with the theme of Sports as an enabler for an inclusive and fit society. Sporting events are organized for different levels, including both professional as well as recreational events among people of various age groups, and of all walks of life, in over 100 schools and in all SAI National Centers of Excellence across the country. At the SAI headquarters at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, more than 500 SAI staff members participated in competitive events like hockey, football, cricket, badminton, athletics and in fun games like tug of war, sack race etc. Ex-elite athletes Yogeshwar Dutt, Akhil Kumar, Zafar Iqbal and CWG medalist Tejaswin Shankar, U-15 Judo cadet world champion Linthoi Chanambam attended the National Sports Day celebrations at JLN Stadium.

**EOM**