



Press Release

New Delhi: 28th March 2022

I was a picky eater, but when I started eating a balanced diet, I felt more energetic and my game improved: Avani Lekara

New Delhi, Mar 28: "It is very likely to come across ridiculous comments and criticism from people. They may think that you cannot achieve something you want but if you keep at it, one day you will excel and they will see that too," This intense message was given by Avani Lekhara, India's first woman double medalist at the Paralympics, while she addressed students from 90 schools, among them a group of visually impaired students during the unique school-visit campaign, Meet The Champions, held in New Delhi's Shaheed Hemu Kalani Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya on Monday.

With cheers and applause, the shooter who created her own legacy in what was her debut Paralympics, was welcomed by students from South East District of New Delhi for a close interaction on Santulit Aahar (balanced diet), fitness and sports.

The ace shooter kicked off the programme by thanking the Honb'le Prime Minister who came up with this unique initiative -Meet the Champions and handed-over the responsibility of carrying the message of the importance of balanced diet to all Olympians and Paralympians.

Taking forward the programme with various interesting anecdotes, videos and questions with the students, 20-year old Avani shared her childhood memories related to diet, her fitness routine and academics. "I was very picky about food and fast food has been my favourite. But once I started having a balanced diet I realised that I felt more energetic and my game improved. If you eat well, no matter what you do, whether you play sport or study you will do it better and you will be in a happier state of mind," said Avani.

She also stressed on the importance of having a good group of friends and supportive parents in life and said, "When you have good friends and supportive parents, it becomes easier for one to overcome challenges of life and pursue the goal. As students, it is your duty to support one another. Don't make fun of your around you if they are weak in something, instead help them."

The Golden girl also spoke about her initial days in shooting and how people joked about how thin she was. "During my initial days in sports, I was very thin so people would joke saying how are you



going to pick a 5kg rifle and shoot. But then I never gave up on what I determined to follow and with good diet, extreme practice and confidence, I fired my way to the top of the podium in Paralympics,” she expressed.

Avani also carried the Rifle that fetched her gold medal at the Paralympics and showing the gun, she spoke about its functions and technicalities during the programme.

This unique initiative is being organized jointly by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Ministry of Education and is part of the government’s ‘Azaadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’.

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