

# Standing Committee Report Summary

## Preparation for Olympic Games, 2021

- The Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports (Chair: Dr. V. Sahasrabudhe) submitted its report on Preparation for Olympic Games, 2021 on December 24, 2020. Key observations and recommendations of the Committee include:
  - **Addressing shortage of coaches:** The Committee noted that 561 vacancies exist for the positions of coaches. It recommended filling these up in a time-bound fashion. Further, it recommended an immediate survey to be carried out to assess requirement of coaches for athletes.
  - **Procurement of sports equipment:** The Committee recommended appointing a Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) under the Mission Olympic Cell to coordinate and fast-track procurement of equipment. Head coaches should analyse equipment availability and submit demands to the CPO. A digital portal listing equipment, nutritional and training requirements should also be created. Deficits noted from the portal can be addressed by the CPO.
  - **Human and technical support:** Head coaches must create a customised 200-day plan for qualified athletes listing focus areas for training to streamline preparation. The plans should be based on assessments taking into account cardio-pulmonary function tests, and physiological, mental and nutritional evaluations. Domestic ex-players and sports performance analysis experts can be engaged to guide preparation and give data-backed inputs to athletes on performance and technique.
  - **Financial support:** The Committee recommended certain measures for providing financial support to sportspersons: (i) guaranteeing a minimum fixed financial aid for every athlete doing well at the national level, (ii) formulating a mechanism to ensure financial security for players and coaches during and post their careers based on their contribution, and (iii) covering life and health insurance for all Olympians. Further, it recommended a 3% sports quota reservation in government jobs for all medal winning athletes.
- **Medical support:** The Committee recommended the following measures to provide medical support to athletes: (i) ensuring availability of medical staff and equipment within select training centres to minimise time for treatment, (ii) specialised medical insurance schemes to cover sports injuries as per the needs of each sport, (iii) prioritisation of athletes, coaches, and staff going for the 2021 Olympics during the COVID vaccination process.
- **Funding:** The Committee recommended the Indian Olympic Association to sign up with a sponsorship management firm to gain corporate sponsorship for the 2021 Olympics. It noted that funds earmarked for Olympics preparation under the Olympic Podium Scheme are being used to cover discretionary expenses for national sports federations, which undermines independence of the scheme. Further, the Committee noted that allocations to national sports federations are being slashed in revised estimates, leading to strained finances. It recommended that this practice of slashing funds to sports federations needs to be stopped.
- **Investment:** The Committee recommended that state governments should recognise sports as an ‘industry’ under their industrial policies to encourage investment in the sector. It also recommended taking measures to increase the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions to sports, which currently comprises only about 2% of all CSR funds.
- **Recovering from impact of COVID-19:** The Committee recommended identifying training facilities and sports centres for qualified athletes which have not opened since the national lockdown. These centres should be reopened or alternate arrangements for training should be made. It also recommended creating bio-bubbles in the training facilities so that athletes can train in isolation.
- The Committee also noted that participation in international competitions and tournaments is crucial for players. It recommended prioritising upcoming international competitions to compensate for the lack of exposure during the lockdown period.

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