

**Promotion of badminton as major national sports**

467. DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO : Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider promoting Badminton as major national sports since India has made a good mark in the game internationally;

(b) whether Government plans to tap the Badminton potential in small towns particularly places like Guntakal and Guntur where the game has been popular over the years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL): (a) to (c) Sir, Government of India recognizes the importance of the sport of Badminton in India, its popularity among the masses, medal prospects of India and recent performances in various international events, etc. Keeping these factors in view, the Ministry has placed the sport of Badminton in the 'high priority' category.

Further identification and nurturing of the identified talent from various sports disciplines in various States and Districts, including badminton, is done under the following schemes of Sports Authority of India (SAI) through their regional centres and training centres located all over India:

- (a) National Sports Talent Contest (NSTC) Scheme
- (b) Army Boys Sports Companies ( ABSC) Scheme
- (c) SAI Training Centre (STC) Scheme
- (d) Special Area Games (SAG) Scheme
- (e) Centre of Excellence (CoE) Scheme

Under these Schemes, scientific training is imparted to the selected trainees under expert coaches. The trainees are provided assistance for boarding, lodging, equipment, sports-kit, stipend, competition exposure, etc.

**NYKs in West Bengal**

468. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of Nehru Yuva Kendras (NYKs) sanctioned, under construction and actually operating in West Bengal;