

Further, National Coaching Camps have been organized and competitive exposure has been provided abroad to the identified probables.

**Indian contingent for Rio Olympics, 2016**

1017. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that India is sending a contingent of around 100 persons to participate in Rio Olympics, 2016 to be held from 5 to 21 August, 2016;

(b) whether Government is of the view that it is sufficient to send around 100 participants considering the huge population of India *i.e.* 1.21 billion; and

(c) whether Government has formulated any programme to increase the present size of contingent of around 100 participants upto 300 for next Olympics and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India is sending a contingent of 120 sportspersons to participate in Rio Olympics, 2016 to be held from 5th to 21st August, 2016. This is India's largest ever contingent for Olympic Games. Selection of athletes for participation in Olympic Games is based on the qualifying norms prescribed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

(c) The Ministry of Youth Affair and Sports has formulated a programme namely "Target Olympic Podium Scheme" (TOP Scheme) within the overall ambit of the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) with the objective of identifying and supporting potential medal prospects for 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games.

An Elite Athletes Identification Committee has been set up with Ms. Anju Bobby George, renowned athlete as its chairperson, Shri Pullella Gopichand and Ms. M. C. Mary Kom as members among others to evaluate and select potential medal prospects for 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games for support under the Target Olympic Podium (TOP) Scheme. Identified medal prospects are being provided financial assistance for their customized training at Institutes having world class facilities and other necessary support under Target Olympic Podium (TOP) Scheme.

Further, in order to enhance the number of participants in the next Tokyo Olympics, the Government has set up a Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) in Sports Authority of India.