

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SUNIL DUTT): (a) and (b) The process of upgrading and creating facilities of International standard in order to prepare our sportspersons for future international events is an on-going one.

(c) Government of India, in addition to providing sports infrastructure, has taken the following measures to further improve the performance of sportspersons, especially in the forthcoming Olympic and Commonwealth Games:

- (i) Finalization of Long Term Development Plans (LTDP) for various sports disciplines in consultation with the concerned National Sports Federations, former international sportspersons, sports scientists and experts. Plans are under implementation.
- (ii) Provision of equipment and scientific support to sportspersons.
- (iii) Intensive coaching of the players by Indian and foreign coaches in coaching camps.
- (iv) Financial assistance to concerned federations for participation of sportspersons in international tournaments.
- (v) Intensive training abroad to the teams.
- (vi) Assistance for purchase of equipment, scientific support and training and participation within the country and abroad under the 'Scheme relating to talent Search and Training' and the 'National Sports Development Fund'.

Change in venue of National Games 2005

890. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any change in the venue of the National Games 2005 from Assam to Jharkhand is proposed as reported in the media;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is financial crisis in preparations for holding the National Games; and

(c) if so, the measures taken to remove the financial constraints?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SUNIL DUTT): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) Government is not aware of such a situation.
- (c) Does not arise.

Expenditure on officials and sports persons for Athens Olympics

891. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have finalised squads for participation in Athens Olympics, 2004;
- (b) if so, the details of events in which Indian squads will participate;
- (c) the number of officials who will accompany the participants indicating the "criteria" for their selection (event-wise);
- (d) whether it is a fact that the expenditure involved in such international games on "officials" is much more than on participating players; and
- (e) if so, what is the likely "ratio" of estimated expenditure going to be incurred on officials accompanying Athens Olympics during 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SUNIL DUTT): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Indian contingent for participation in Athens Olympics, 2004 is yet to be finalised. However, based on pre-qualification tournaments/competitions, as on 16.7.2004, 76 Indian sportspersons have qualified to participate in the Athens Olympics in events such as archery, athletics, badminton, boxing, hockey (M), judo, rowing, sailing, shooting, swimming, table tennis, tennis, wrestling and weightlifting.

(c) The criterion for ratio of officials to players is laid down by the International Olympic Committee. The exact number of officials accompanying the sportspersons, event-wise, will be known after qualifying competitions in all the disciplines are over. Indian Olympic Association has intimated that the 76 athletes selected so far for the Olympic Games shall be accompanied by 47 officials.

(d) and (e) The estimates on expenditure will be firmed up on receipt of information from the Indian Olympic Association indicating the total number of sportspersons and officials alongwith their names; details of sponsorship obtained and expenditure on various items and reasons/justification for stay of each individual/team in the Games village over and above the competition period.