

Concern over decline in Medal Tally at Olympic Games

SHRI AYODHYA RAMI REDDY ALLA (Andhra Pradesh): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, for allowing me to speak. This is a very important subject. Despite substantial focus and an investment of approximately Rs. 500 crores in last three years for participation in the Paris Olympics and, apart from spending more than Rs. 100 crores for athletes, India, unfortunately, in the overall medal tally got a very disappointing rank of 71. This raises a very critical question about our sports development strategy. The situation highlights a very serious issue: What is our strategy, as a country, to place ourselves in the global platform, especially when we are becoming the fifth largest economy? We are already the fifth largest economy, but in line with that, on our international platforms in sports, as we can see, there is, certainly, a glaring inequality in the sports infrastructure and the strategic support. While elite athletes benefit from the world-class training and also medical support, grassroot sports remain under-funded and overlooked. This limits the opportunity for young athletes in rural and disadvantaged areas. India's position in medal tally behind 70 countries underscores a lack of competitive edge strategy and structuring, revealing systemic issues that need very urgent attention.

Sir, I have a few suggestions to the Government. At federal Government level, I think, each State has to see what is the strategy that needs to be provided and there is also a need to see what gaps are there in corporate sports and other sport societies. We need to do a diagnosis of all that and then prepare a roadmap for our entire sports pattern, in line with where our country is heading. In line with that strategy, a proper structuring -- it could be public-private partnership initiative where various authorities will be involved to make a structuring for the people, the funding, the processes, etc., -- is required. All these need to be evolved. With that, I think, we must come back and show our capability to the globe. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the issue raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ayodhya Rami Reddy Alla: Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Shri Niranjan Bishi (Odisha), Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala), Shri R. Girirajan (Tamil Nadu), Shri Jose K. Mani (Kerala), Shri Sanjeev Arora (Punjab), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Shri Haris Beeraan (Kerala) and Dr. John Brittas (Kerala).