

NSFs need to become Professional: Arun Jaitley

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Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, while addressing the Conference of Ministers and Secretaries of States / Union Territories in-charge of Youth Affairs and Sports, said that the NSFs should “professionalise” their administrative structure rather than continue as “oligarchies”.

Jaitley, who attended the two-day conference as a Chief Guest, said that the NSFs play a big role in the development of sports in the Country but they have not been able to generate their own revenue and be self sufficient.

"The NSFs should professionalise their administrative structure rather than being reduced to oligarchies. There is a complex sports management structure in the country. It's the primary responsibility of the States to develop sports," he said.

The Minister said, Delhi has adequate sports infrastructure due to various international events held in the past, however, he said, this infrastructure is underutilized. He suggested that with a liberal approach people in Delhi and NCR should be encouraged to utilize these facilities properly for sporting purposes after making a reasonable payment.

Jaitley stressed on the need for combined involvement of Corporate Sector and NSFs to lead sports to greater heights. He praised the BCCI for its self-sufficiency and for building world-class cricket infrastructure in the Country which shows that a sport can become successful even without the government funding.

"I am willing to support but the States and NSFs will have to look for their own revenue to build infrastructure. In a small way, there is Corporate support in Tennis and Golf but all other NSFs are not self sufficient," said the former BCCI Vice-President "Funding for sports training now qualifies for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) worth thousands of crores. So, NSFs can be linked to Corporate houses for CSR funding for training of sportspersons."

Jaitley suggested that concentration on sports of core competence such as Hockey, Wrestling, Archery, Badminton, Boxing and Shooting can produce better results for the Country in international sports events like Olympics.

"All Countries cannot excel in all sports and a focused approach on sports of core competence has yielded better results for the countries world over," he said.

Sports Minister Sarbanand Sonowal said that the Union Budget has provided funds for innovative schemes, particularly aimed at promoting sports in the North East Region of the Country.

Sonowal added that his Ministry is hoping to channelise the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to join mainstream sports disciplines.

He also hoped that the 'Target Olympic Podium' (TOP) Scheme - an initiative to identify medal prospects for the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games - will yield the desired results.
