

The Asian Age

Five per cent of government jobs to go to sportspersons

The Maharashtra government, in the backdrop of the ongoing Olympic games at Rio de Janeiro, has decided to reserve five per cent of government jobs for sportspersons who have showcased their skills at the national and international level.

Presently, sportspersons get government jobs on recommendations, but the government has now made it a policy by introducing a quota in government and semi-government organisations. “Five per cent government and semi-government jobs should be reserved for sportspersons in the state across the various grades and categories. Even those playing chess will be eligible,” an official from the school education and sports department said.

The sportspersons will receive benefits afforded by government jobs. The decision was taken on July 16 to encourage sports activities and a government resolution in this regard was issued on Thursday.

The government will offer grade one jobs to sportspersons who have made strides in international games like the Olympics and Asian Games. All other sportspersons playing at the state and national level will also be considered for the quota.

The announcement by the state government came after Sakshi Malik was awarded Rs 2.5 crore and a government job for winning a bronze medal at the Olympics.

Former cricket player Nilesh Kulkarni welcomed the decision and said it would encourage sportsmen. “It will open up opportunities for players and give them financial stability. It is important for any sportsman to have some financial security.

Cricket is at a bigger advantage while other sports have to reach its level of popularity. The government jobs would create a conducive atmosphere for players to concentrate on their games,” said Mr Kulkarni, who runs the International Institute of Sports Management.

Sports management professional Bhupesh Sawant also welcomed the decision but said that it has to be implemented properly. “Populist

announcements are made during international games like the Olympics but not properly implemented. Also, the players should be able to focus on the game and not feel too much work pressure,” Mr Sawant said.