

WIN ONE MEDAL WITH HONOUR, BUT NO DRUGS PLEASE

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It is not only Olympic sports but all sports have to stay clear of drugs. It is better to win one medal with honour than winning 50 medals otherwise, says Union Minister of Sports Manohar Singh Gill, claiming that the country has one of the best set ups to check doping in sports.

When asked to comment on the doping controls stressed by the organizers of the World Cup Kabaddi Tournament, he said that he was for "total drug free sports". "I am a great fan of Punjabi style kabaddi. When I was a small boy, I was a great fan of Makhan Singh, a champion in 10 villages of our area. He was a great kabaddi player. We should also send a message to other countries participating in the Kabaddi World Cup. They should also go for random sampling of their kabaddi players so that this great sport, like all other sports, remains free from drugs," suggests Gill.

Ever since he took over as Union Minister of Sports in April 2008, the

Ministry had been staying focused on all drugs in all sports. In 2009 after several months of hard work, India got its latest laboratory with facilities for testing dope accredited with the WADA, the world body controlling doping in sports.

The laboratory has been set up next to Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi and it has been provided with the latest equipment, testing agents and equipment. Highly qualified staff has been appointed. Instead of spending US \$ 80000 for getting a sample tested from similar laboratories in Japan or Bangkok, says Gill, now we have a world standard facility available to us in Delhi.

"We want to give our message loud and clear. Sampling is not only limited to players, but even coaches can



Sport Minister MS Gill

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be tested for doping. Our role is not only for taking samples and analyzing them but also to give the athlete or the coach an opportunity to appeal against the test report.

Associated with the New Delhi lab that besides being WADA accredited and under NADA - our national body to check doping in sports, are legal and medical experts.

"Associated with the lab are top pharmacologists, top legal and medical experts. The main purpose of the lab is to hold frequent and random tests, provide quick results and suggest action on reports. Then there is a Tribunal available that is headed by a retired Sessions Judge. Further, there is an appellate Tribunal headed by a retired Judge of the High Court," adds Gill.