



“Fitness is Key to Becoming Viksit Bharat by 2047”: Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya at First Ever National Fitness & Wellness Conclave 2025

Union Sports Minister Highlights Link Between Fitness, Economic Growth and Youth Potential

MoS Sports, Raksha Nikhil Khadse Calls for Collective Effort Towards a Fitter India

Rohit Shetty, Harbhajan Singh and Saina Nehwal Felicitated at National Fitness & Wellness Conclave 2025 as Fit India Icons along with other celebrities

Posted On: 01 NOV 2025 8:40PM by PIB Delhi

The Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports and Labour & Employment, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, felicitated the newly appointed Fit India Icons, Bollywood Producer Rohit Shetty, World Cup-winning cricketer Harbhajan Singh and Olympic medallist Saina Nehwal, at the National Fitness & Wellness Conclave 2025, held at The Trident in Mumbai today. The conclave celebrated India's growing fitness and wellness movement under the Fit India Mission, marking a significant step towards building a Fit and Viksit Bharat.



Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports, Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse felicitated Saiyami Kher, Shivoham and Vrinda Bhatt as Fit India Icons, recognizing their contribution to promoting health and wellness across communities. Ankur Garg, and Fit India Champions Karan Tacker, Vishwas Patil and Krishna Prakash were also felicitated by Union Sports Minister Dr. Mandaviya as Fit India Ambassadors for their ongoing efforts in inspiring citizens to embrace fitness as a way of life.

Fit India Family just got stronger!

Welcoming Rohit Shetty, Harbhajan Singh & Saina Nehwal to the Fit India movement. pic.twitter.com/hRir3I3fw4

— Dr Mansukh Mandaviya (@mansukhmandviya) November 1, 2025



“If we do not understand the value of fitness, it will not be possible to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047. Times have changed. In earlier days, people travelled on foot and cycled to distant places. Fitness happened naturally. In a digital world, we hardly move and don’t care about fitness. We have to find ways to break that,” the Union Minister said.



“Only if the middle class and upper middle class give priority to fitness will we grow faster as a nation. No other economy in the world is growing at 8% annually. Imagine what fitness can do to India where 65% of the population is below the age of 35,” added Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya.



“Fitness is not only about health. It is integral to business as well. There is a huge market for sports goods. I can see how the awareness towards sports is changing. If we can harness sports science and produce nutrition supplements and fitness equipment in India, the sports fitness industry will stand to gain immensely,” he further elaborated.

Smt. Raksha Khadse said: “India is an emerging nation in sports. The opportunities in the fitness world are immense. It is necessary that the entire ecosystem comes together and works towards a fitter India. Sundays on Cycle is a small effort but the results can be great in the long run. India’s all-round growth is clearly related to physical and mental growth.”

Film director and producer Rohit Shetty cautioned against “health influencers” who preach fitness in social media without proper knowledge. “It is a scary scenario. The new generation has to be careful when they want to grow their bodies overnight.”



Olympic medallist Saina Nehwal said “fitness is related to sports culture.” “Look at China and Japan. Their excellent results in global competitions are a result of the fitness culture. In India, this is changing. There is a lot of talent but there is no short cut to success. Parents need to understand that and be patient. Pay attention to fitness first and excellence will come with hard work. Also, keep that mobile phone away and be strict with your child,” said Saina.



World Cup cricket champion Harbhajan Singh said, “All credit to Virat Kohli for bringing greater awareness about the importance of fitness for the Indian cricket team. We always had the skills but Indian cricketers are now superbly fit. They don’t drop catches anymore and that makes a difference. Eat right, rest right and work out properly and see the difference. I really appreciate the efforts of the Prime Minister and the Sports Ministry for prioritising fitness,” said Harbhajan.



Stakeholders who participated in the two panel discussions around fitness culture and fitness industry agreed unanimously that fitness culture has to start from a young age and parents have a role to play in ensuring children don't get addicted to mobile phones. Experts suggested that precaution should be taken against spurious supplements, wrong advice on how to build a muscular body quickly and guard against food apps that sold junk food.



Rini Choudhury/Anjelina Alexander

(Release ID: 2185333) Visitor Counter : 1065

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