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## A feather in MP's cap

**M**adhya Pradesh has achieved laurels of becoming the leading state in promoting sports in the country. President Pratibha Devi Singh Patil on Aug 29 conferred 'Rashtriya Khel Puraskar' to Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan organised at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

In the letter of citation it has been mentioned that MP has become a role model for other states to follow its emulating works carried out by it in the field of sports. There are 16 sports academies in the State. An amount of Rs 15 crore has been allocated for establishment of these academies. Coaching is being imparted to as many as 369 sportspersons in these academies.

Chief Minister Chouhan has said that sportsmen would be provided all the world class facilities and if the need arises they would also be sent abroad for training. The excellent sportspersons would be given priority in the government jobs. Chouhan awarded Vikram and Eklavya and Vishwamitra awards to 23 sportspersons and three coaches on the Sports Day in Bhopal. In the field of sports, Madhya Pradesh has not restricted itself to cities only; as many as 446 rural sports grounds have been established in 46 districts. For this purpose, 381 villages, with more than 5,000 population have been earmarked.

With such a huge preparation in the field of sports, now there are expectations from Madhya Pradesh that its sportspersons would carve a niche in the sporting arena at national and world level in the line of Sania Mirza and Saina Nehwal who have achieved spots in tennis and badminton at world level. Aslam Sher Khan from Bhopal has proved his mettle in hockey event in Olympics.