

# Parliament passes Sports University Bill

PTI

NEW DELHI, 9 AUGUST

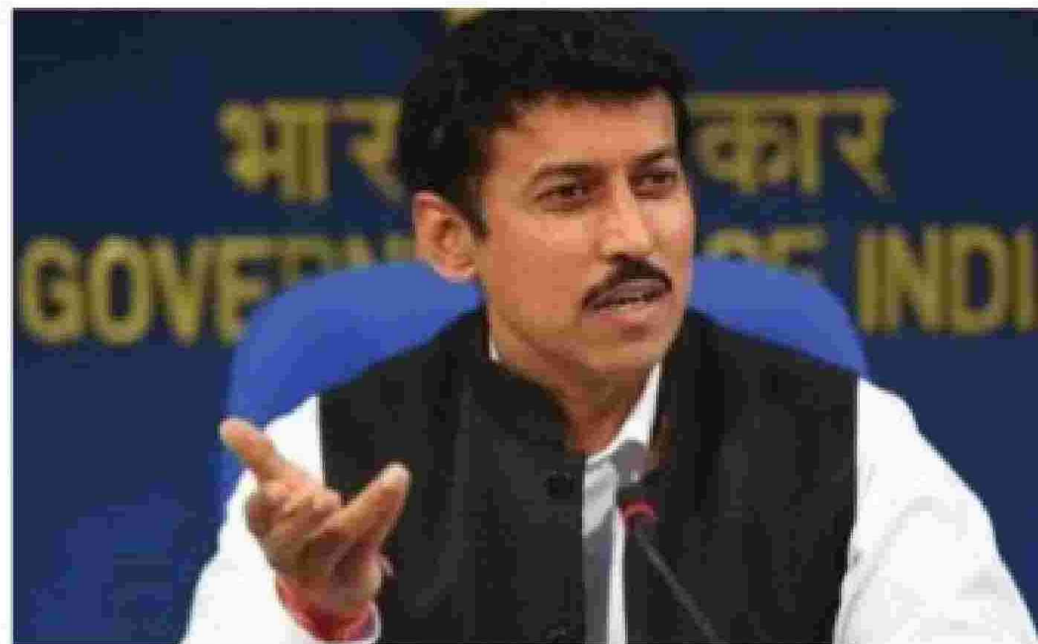
Parliament today passed a bill to establish a National Sports University in Manipur, amid protests by Congress members who trooped into the well of Rajya Sabha demanding a JPC probe into the Rafale fighter jet deal.

The National Sports University Bill, which was passed by a voice vote in the Upper House, was adopted by the Lok Sabha on August 3.

The bill seeks to set up a specialised university in Manipur, which would be the first of its kind, to promote sports education in the areas of sports sciences, sports technology, sports management and sports coaching.

Replying to the debate on the bill, Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said the proposed university would offer masters and bachelor degree in various fields including sports management and sports science.

Besides the main campus in Manipur, regional centres of the university would



also be established in other parts of the country and abroad as well. "We want to establish a high standard institution," Rathore said.

A sportsperson will be the university vice chancellor, while its academic council will also comprise sports personalities, he added.

Even as the minister was speaking, Congress members kept on raising slogans from the Well of the House against the Prime Minister and the BJP and demanding setting up of a joint parliamentary committee to probe the Rafale deal.

Later, the protesting members set on the floor of the Well continued to raise slogans.

Amidst the continued din, Rathore said the government has enhanced monthly allowances of athletes for food and other things.

He said the government has also increased the salary of the national level coaches and other staff, including sports psychologists and masseurs.

Rathore said 750 players have been selected under the Khelo India initiative and the government would provide them Rs 5 lakh each for

the next 8 years to support them. The government was also considering to enhance the National Sports Development Fund so that the sportspersons do not face any dearth of funds.

The proposed university at Manipur would also function as the national training centre for select sports disciplines by adopting best international practices, he said. In order to make the university a world-class institution, the government has signed an agreement with two Australian universities - University of Canberra and Victoria University -- for development of curriculum, research facilities and laboratories, among others.

Nominated member MC Mary Kom supported the bill and said the legislation would help Manipur become "super Manipur in the field of sports."

The renowned boxer also wished the Indian contingent for the upcoming Asian Games saying "with 10 to 15 days to go for the games, I would like to wish Indian contingent all the very best."