

Unit -5 (A)

The World of Limitless Possibilities

Key Points of the Chapter

- This inspiring chapter from the textbook celebrates the Paralympic Games and the extraordinary resilience of athletes with locomotor, sensory, or intellectual disabilities.
- It opens with a picture of Sheetal Devi, a para-archer honoured with the Arjuna Award in January 2024, and features an in-depth interview with Dr. Deepa Malik, a trailblazing Indian Paralympian who turned paralysis into limitless possibilities.
- Through Dr. Malik's journey-from a spinal tumour at age 29 to winning silver at the 2016 Rio Paralympics and becoming India's first female Paralympic medallist-the chapter redefines disability as a unique strength.
- It emphasises the power of sports to challenge stereotypes, promote inclusivity, and create a society where everyone, regardless of ability, is treated with dignity.

Detailed Summary

The chapter introduces the inspiring world of the **Paralympic Games**, which celebrate the resilience, courage, and extraordinary talent of athletes with disabilities. These games go beyond competition and aim to challenge stereotypes and redefine what people with disabilities can achieve. India's participation began in 1968, and the first medal was clinched in swimming in 1972, since then, many athletes have brought honour to the nation.

The main focus of the chapter is an interview with **Dr. Deepa Malik**, a renowned Indian para-athlete and awardee of Khel Ratna, Arjuna, and Padma Shri. At the age of 29, she was diagnosed with a spinal tumour. After surgery, she became paralysed from the waist down and was told she would spend her life in a wheelchair. Faced with this life-changing situation, she chose not to give up but to transform her life into one full of possibilities.

Since she loved sports and had been a swimmer too, Dr. Malik decided to switch to para-athletics - and this is how her Paralympics journey began. Her major breakthrough came at the **2016 Rio Paralympics**, where she won a silver medal in shot put, becoming India's first ever female Paralympics medallist across any sport. She also became the first Indian female para-athlete to win a medal at the Asian Games.

Dr. Malik shares that one of her biggest challenges was society's tendency to underestimate her abilities. However, with strong determination, mental resilience, and the support of her family, she overcame these obstacles. She believes that sports, especially the Paralympics, play a vital role in changing societal attitudes and breaking stereotypes about disability.

Beyond her achievements, she actively works for **inclusivity and awareness**. She works to strengthen the emotional health of persons with challenges, empowers women through outdoor sports and adventure activities, supports persons from lower socio-economic strata, and provides equipment to para sportspersons.. She strongly believes that youth can bring change in society.

The chapter concludes with her powerful message: every setback is an opportunity, and disability is not a limitation but a unique strength waiting to be unleashed.

Theme/Message

Theme

The chapter focuses on the idea of **limitless possibilities**, highlighting the **resilience, determination, and strength** of para-athletes. It shows that **disability does not define a person's potential**, and with courage and perseverance, individuals can overcome any obstacle. Through the journey of Dr. Deepa Malik, the chapter emphasises "ability beyond disability" and challenges societal stereotypes about physical limitations. It also highlights the role of sports, especially Paralympics, in changing perceptions and promoting inclusivity. Overall, the theme underlines that true strength lies in **mental courage, self-belief, and the will to transform challenges into opportunities**, proving that nothing is impossible

Let's Revise: How does the chapter show that Paralympics can change societal attitudes?

Difficult Words

1. Resilience: ability to recover quickly from difficult circumstances
2. Locomotor: related to bones, joints, or muscles
3. Quell: to overcome
4. Indelible: enduring or permanent
5. Squander: waste
6. Remorse: regret
7. Trailblazer: pioneer or leader
8. Coveted: strongly desired by many
9. Accolades: praise and honours
10. Proponent: a person who speaks in support of a particular idea or action
11. Fortitude: strength to face adversity or difficulty
12. Testament: proof
13. Preconceived notions: opinions about something even before knowing the truth
14. Inclusivity: including everyone and their thoughts and treating them equally
15. Advocating: supporting or suggesting an idea
16. Unleashed: release of something powerful that cannot be controlled