



Commonwealth Games: Former hurdler Oyiki credits improved athlete welfare for Team Nigeria's Glasgow success | 1

Former Nigerian hurdler and Olympian Moses Oyiki says he's witnessing a turnaround in how the country treats its athletes, crediting the Tinubu administration's approach at the ongoing Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Oyiki, a 1990 African champion who represented Nigeria at the Atlanta '96 Olympics and now practices law in Ireland, has long been an outspoken critic of Nigerian sports administrators.

Speaking in Glasgow, he said he was struck by the shift in how athletes and coaches are being treated, moving away from what he described as years of neglect by past administrators more focused on personal gain.

He attributed the change to the current leadership at the National Sports Commission (NSC) and said athletes he'd spoken with echoed his impression, describing proper training camps and direct financial incentives as essential, since athletes need funds to support themselves and their families.

The President of the Nigeria Weightlifting Federation, Dr. Ibrahim Abdul, also attributed the country's impressive weightlifting performance to improved preparation, overseas training camps and the introduction of instant cash rewards for medal winners.

According to him, Nigerian athletes benefited from extensive training, including a pre-Games camp in Aberdeen, Scotland, where they trained with competition-standard equipment before arriving in Glasgow. Gold medalists received instant rewards of \$5,000, silver \$2,000 and bronze \$1,000, separate from an additional \$5,000 bank transfer for gold winners.

Some athletes also received additional financial incentives from the NSC in recognition of exceptional performances. Heavyweight lifter Riluan Idris, considered an underdog going in, had his reward doubled to \$10,000 by NSC Chairman Shehu Dikko before competing.

Among those rewarded were para discus world record holder Goodness Nwachukwu, shot put silver medallist Jessica Oji and boxer Patricia Mbata, whose performances attracted additional cash incentives despite narrowly missing gold.

Director-General of the National Institute for Sports, Philip Shaibu, expressed optimism that the improved welfare system would encourage more athletes to



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compete for Nigeria ahead of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

The Chairman of the National Sports Commission, Shehu Dikko, and the Commission's Director-General, Bukola Olopade, also thanked President Bola Tinubu for supporting initiatives aimed at improving athletes' welfare and preparation for international competitions.