

In Conversation With Sanvi Rai Budding Para Swimmer

Name:- Sanvi Rai

Age:- 13

Date of Birth:- 02 February 2013

Place of Birth:- New Delhi

Educational Institutes Attended:

Navy Children School, Chanakyapuri New Delhi

Educational Qualification: IX

Currently Working as: Athlete [Para-Swimmer]



Introduction to Swimming: I started my swimming journey in 2024. What began as an opportunity to learn and enjoy the water gradually turned into a true passion. Through swimming, I have learned the values of discipline, perseverance, confidence, and consistent hard work. The sport has helped me grow not only as an athlete but also as an individual, teaching me the importance of dedication and self-belief in achieving goals.

First Coach: Ranbir Sharma [SAI]

Your current coach: Ranbir Sharma [SAI]

Your favorite Indian swimmer (if any & why): Devanshi Satija is my favorite Indian swimmer because of her dedication, determination, and achievements in para swimming. Her journey inspires young swimmers like me to believe in ourselves, stay confident during challenges, and work hard toward achieving our goals.

Your favorite International swimmer (if any & why): Katie Ledecky is my favorite international swimmer because of her incredible consistency, strong work ethic, and remarkable achievements at the highest level of the sport. Her commitment to excellence and disciplined approach to training motivate me to keep improving every day and strive for success in swimming.

Your main swimming event: Swimming Events

100m Freestyle

100m Backstroke

200m Individual Medley

Turing Point in Life: Representing myself in major swimming competitions and winning medals at the national level gave me confidence and motivated me to pursue swimming more seriously. These experiences strengthened my determination, improved my competitive mindset, and inspired me to continue working hard toward higher achievements in the sport.

The Most Cherished moment in life is: The most cherished moment of my life was floating independently in the water for the very first time. Although it may have seemed like a small achievement, for me it marked the beginning of a beautiful journey in swimming. That moment gave me confidence, happiness, and the motivation to keep learning and improving, eventually opening the door to many new opportunities and experiences in life.

Major Achievements

Won 3 Gold Medals at the 3rd Delhi State Para Swimming Championship 2025–26
Secured 2 Gold Medals and 1 Silver Medal at the 25th National Para Swimming Championship 2025–26
Successfully achieved the qualifying standard for the Asian Para Swimming Championships
Won a Silver Medal at the Delhi International Swimathon
Secured 2 Bronze Medals at the South Delhi Swimming Competition
Won 1 Silver Medal and 1 Bronze Medal at the West Zone Delhi Swimming Association Competition
Secured 3 Gold Medals at the Apeejay Swimming Talent Hunt Competition
Earned numerous medals and recognitions in various swimming competitions, reflecting dedication, consistency, and passion for the sport.

Awarded Arjuna Award/ Major Award/ Recognition in the year:

Consistently recognized for outstanding performances in state, national, inter-school swimming competitions, and para swimming events, demonstrating dedication, discipline, and continuous improvement in the sport.

I give credit of my success to: I am grateful to my parents, my coach Mr. Ranbir Sharma, my teachers, teammates, and everyone who has supported, guided, and encouraged me throughout my swimming journey. Their constant motivation and belief in me have played a significant role in my growth and achievements as a swimmer.

How can Indian Swimming Progress?

I believe Indian swimming can progress through stronger grassroots development, improved infrastructure, and better access to qualified coaches across the country. It is important to provide quality training facilities and create more opportunities for young swimmers to grow at both national and international levels.

Key Areas for Improvement:

Enhancing swimming infrastructure and year-round training facilities
Supporting athletes from diverse and underprivileged backgrounds
Providing greater international exposure and competition opportunities
Offering financial, nutritional, sports science, and technical support to athletes
Giving special focus to para and deaf athletes with equal opportunities and specialized coaching
Educating and developing coaches with modern scientific training methods
Conducting grassroots talent identification programs in schools and rural areas
Increasing awareness and promotion of swimming across villages, towns, and cities
Organizing more national camps and competitive events throughout the year
Improving access to physiotherapy, recovery, rehabilitation, and injury management support
Encouraging parental, institutional, and corporate support for athletes
Focusing on quality training rather than only quantity-based training methods
Creating long-term athlete development programs for sustained international success

Developing more all-season swimming pools, especially in North India, to ensure uninterrupted training throughout the year

Strengthening coordination between coaches, federations, academies, and sports authorities for athlete development

Promoting inclusive sports culture where para and deaf swimmers receive equal recognition and opportunities

With proper planning, strong support systems, scientific coaching, and equal opportunities for all athletes, India can achieve much greater success in international swimming competitions, including the Olympics, Paralympics, and Deaflympics.

What are the challenges (if any) involved in coaching elite swimmers: Maintaining peak performance consistently, preventing injuries, managing competition pressure, and designing training programs according to each athlete's individual needs are some of the biggest challenges in coaching elite swimmers. Coaches must also focus on the athlete's physical fitness, mental strength, recovery, and long-term development to ensure consistent progress at the highest level.

What is your advice to elite swimmers: Stay disciplined, trust the training process, remain patient during difficult times, and never stop learning and improving. Success in swimming comes through hard work, consistency, determination, and self-belief. Athletes should focus on continuous improvement and maintain a positive mindset throughout their journey.

What are the challenges you faced, if any, in training the differently abled swimmers? One of the biggest challenges in training differently-abled swimmers has been overcoming communication barriers and ensuring effective interaction during training sessions and competitions. Understanding the specific needs of each athlete and adapting training methods accordingly is very important. However, with determination, family support, proper coaching, and mutual understanding, these challenges can be successfully overcome.

What all has changed for good in Indian swimming since you started swimming?

Since I started swimming, many positive changes have taken place in Indian swimming. There is now greater awareness about the sport, and opportunities for swimmers are gradually improving. The swimming community has become more supportive, and athletes of all abilities, including para and deaf swimmers, are receiving more recognition and encouragement.

There are also better training facilities, increased participation at different levels, and more opportunities for swimmers to compete in national and international competitions. Overall, Indian swimming is progressing in a positive direction, creating a stronger platform for future athletes.

How are you contributing currently to Indian Swimming?

I am currently contributing to Indian swimming by competing at a high level, winning medals at the national level, and continuously striving to improve my performance as an athlete. Through my dedication and achievements in swimming, I aim to proudly represent my country and inspire other young swimmers to pursue excellence in the sport.

I have also achieved the unofficial qualifying time for the Asian Games, which has further

motivated me to work harder toward representing India at major international competitions in the future.

As a para swimmer, I want to encourage more para and differently-abled athletes to take up swimming and believe in their abilities. I strongly believe that with determination, discipline, and hard work, no challenge is too big to overcome. Through my journey, performances, and experiences, I hope to inspire the next generation of swimmers to dream big, stay confident, and continue working toward their goals with dedication and self-belief.

How you see yourself five years from now: I see myself continuing to compete at the highest level and proudly representing India in major international competitions. My dream is to win a gold medal for India at the Paralympics and continue achieving success in swimming.

At the same time, I also hope to inspire and guide the next generation of swimmers through my journey and experience. In the future, I would like to support and coach young swimmers, especially deaf athletes, and help make training and opportunities more accessible for them.

Message:

Dream big, work hard, and never give up. Every champion once started as a beginner with a dream and the courage to keep moving forward. No dream is too big when you believe in yourself and stay committed to your goals.

Success comes through dedication, discipline, perseverance, and consistent hard work. Never let challenges define your limits. Stay focused, trust the process, and let your actions speak louder than words. Always focus on quality over quantity, because true growth comes from purposeful effort and continuous improvement.

Keep believing in yourself, stay determined during difficult times, and continue swimming forward with confidence, passion, and a positive mindset. One day, your hard work will speak for itself.



MEENAKSHI PAHUJA

