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Ontario government commits $3 million for 2022 Valour Games

Written By Robert Belardi

This November has once again been a time to remember, and also a time to envision.

The Ontario government announced earlier this month, $3 million dollars will be allocated to support the recent proposal of the Valour Games, a national multi-sport competition for wounded, injured, ill and disabled military personnel.

In the statement, Premier Doug Ford corroborated the government's decision to help.

?The Valour Games will provide another important opportunity for Ontarians to recognize the skills and excellence of our men and women in uniform and unite our province and our country at a time when it's needed most,? Ford said.

The proposal and funding comes on the back of the success of the Invictus Games and the idea of hosting it in 2022; to put it simply, made a lot of sense.

?I like the idea of it being in 2022 just because, right now with the global pandemic there's a lot of uncertainty. So, it being in 2022, it gives us a chance, it gives the organizers a chance to have the time to put together a truly world class event. It's going to be a week-long event,? said MPP Michael Parsa of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill.

Ottawa will be the host of 500 military, male and female athletes from all over the country for the inaugural event.

In this week-long competition, sports such as archery, indoor rowing, powerlifting, sitting volleyball, swimming, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair tennis and wheelchair rugby will be included.

There has been no confirmation on how athletes will be selected and the final date they must be entered. Until, then, all athletes have two years to prepare for a very-important sports year in 2022.

The World Cup will be held in Qatar and if the pandemic has finally been solved by then, it just might be a year of rejuvenation for sport and other industries.

?You think about the hit we've taken as an industry, so many sports leagues being cancelled and games being deferred and modified. It's taken its toll on not just the sporting event but also on our hospitality industry and restaurants and hotels, who heavily rely on these events,? Parsa said.

This event is also inclusive to raise public awareness on the health of those who serve in the Canadian Armed Forces.

According to the release, sixty per cent of personnel released from the military have permanent physical limitations. Military veterans experience a higher level of ?depression, stress, anxiety and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.?

If it's one thing that is known to help those who experience these problems, it is sport.

?I really do believe that sports, in the past and to my involvement, has always been one of those avenues that's always helped people psychologically, mentally. When you're able to participate in sports, it gives you that self-confidence to take that into other parts,? Parsa said.

?People who are involved in sporting events have been able to succeed and be a lot better at their work, family life and personal life. This is not going to be any different. These events will do that much more for our veterans and our wounded. It will help all of them

who are going to be participating and involved in these games.?

Parsa says, the organization committee in the days, weeks and months ahead, will be planning broadcast partners for this event, ticket sales and building robust sponsor relationships.