

J&K Masters team flagged off for 8th National Masters Games

45 athletes from seven districts to compete in 10 sporting disciplines at Pune

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Masters Games Association (JKMGA) on Saturday flagged off its contingent for the 8th National Masters Games, scheduled to be held in Pune, Maharashtra from January 27 to 31. A flag-off ceremony was organized at Gulshan Ground, Jammu, marking the official departure of the team.

A total of 45 master athletes, including men and women, will represent Jammu and Kashmir in 10 different sporting disciplines. The players hail from seven districts—Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Baramulla, Srinagar, Samba, and Rajouri—reflecting the Union Territory's diverse sporting talent.

The master athletes from Jammu and Kashmir will compete in Handball (Men and Women), Weightlifting (Men), Athletics (Men), Chess (Men and Women), Karate (Men), Swimming (Men), Judo (Men),



Dronacharya Awardee and Chief Wushu Coach of India, DySP Kuldeep Handoo flagging off teams from Jammu on Saturday.

Badminton (Women), Table Tennis (Men), and Lawn Tennis (Men).

The ceremony was graced by the Chief Guest, Dronacharya Awardee and Chief Wushu Coach of India, DySP Kuldeep Handoo.

Addressing the gathering, Kuldeep Handoo highlighted the psychological and emotional benefits of sports participation at any age. He emphasized that training, goal-setting, and competition enhance self-confidence, reduce stress, and contribute to overall mental well-being.

Handoo lauded the Masters Games for promoting inclusivity and challenging age-related stereotypes. He said the event celebrates the strength, resilience, and determination of master athletes, proving that age is no barrier to sporting excellence.

JKMGA President Ranjit Singh Chib, former SSP and international handball player, though unable to attend, conveyed his message to the athletes. He underlined the role of Masters Games in promoting lifelong fitness

and inspiring future generations by redefining competitive sports beyond age.

General Secretary Neete Kaur expressed gratitude to all district master players for their enthusiastic participation and dedication, particularly in challenging winter conditions. She thanked DySP Kuldeep Handoo and the Jammu and Kashmir Police for their continued support and extended best wishes to the contingent.

The association also recalled its remarkable performance at the 7th National

Masters Games held in Dharamshala, where 110 players from Jammu and Kashmir competed in 11 disciplines and won an impressive 87 medals, including 44 gold, 28 silver, and 15 bronze.

The proceedings were conducted by Mamta Bajaj, Vice President of JKMGGA, while the vote of thanks was presented by Ashok Sharma, Executive Member.

Several prominent dignitaries from the sports fraternity, including Romesh Sharma, Rabinder Singh, Ranjeet Singh Wazir, Kuljeet Singh, Sanjay Puri and others were present, who all shared their heartfelt encouragement and best wishes for the Masters athletes heading to Pune, Maharashtra.

The flag-off ceremony concluded on a high note as the J&K Masters contingent departed to represent the Union Territory with pride, determination, and sportsmanship at the national stage.

Ashoka Law College celebrates Republic Day with enthusiasm



STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: Ashoka Law College, Kathua celebrated Republic Day with great gaiety and patriotic fervour.

Dr. Ajeet Lal, Director of the College, hoisted the National Flag, followed by the singing of the National Anthem. While addressing the gathering, Dr. Ajeet Lal highlighted the significance of Republic Day and paid rich tributes to national martyrs such as Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, and Rajguru, who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the nation.

Faculty members, students, and civilians actively participated in the celebration. The programme concluded with the distribution of sweets among all participants, strengthening the spirit of unity, patriotism, and national pride.

1st Jammu Gold Cup Football Tournament 2026 Sainik Colony FC, Young Rovers FC register wins on Day 2

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The 1st Jammu Gold Cup Football Tournament 2026, organised by the District Football Association (DFA) Jammu in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council and under the aegis of the J&K Football Association, witnessed exciting matches on the second day of the tournament at Mini Stadium, Parade here.

In the first match of the day, Sainik Colony FC defeated Jammu Sports by a convincing margin of 6-2. For Sainik Colony FC, goals were scored in the 19th, 33rd, 40th, 58th, 63rd, and 65th minutes, while Jammu Sports managed to score in the 13th and 67th minutes. The match officials were Referee Rieky Karthik, along with Abhishek and



Rocky as assistant referees. The chief guest on the occasion was Meetu Singh, National Women Football Player. The second match was played between JK Bank Academy and Young Rovers FC, in which Young Rovers FC emerged victorious with a 2-0 win. Anmol scored the first goal in the 19th minute, while Mustafa netted the second goal in the 45th minute. The match referees were Bilal Ahmad, Kartik Sharma,

Ramesh Kumar, and Risky Kumar. The chief guest for the second match was Balvir Singh, National Judo Player and Minority Cell President Apni Party, accompanied by Bunty Singh, Kuldeep Singh, Amarjeet Singh, David Mash, Yousuf Don, Kamal Jeet Kumar, and Moon Madan.

Tomorrow's fixtures include SCFA vs Nagrota FC; Pegasus FC vs Shaheen FC, and Churchill Brothers vs Sainik Colony FC.

Women are the real strength of our society: Rekha Mahajan Praises women athletes at ASMITA Khelo India Women's Kickboxing League

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: "Women are the real strength of our society. When we empower women through sports, education, and opportunities, we empower the entire nation," said BJP J&K UT Vice President Rekha Mahajan at the ASMITA Khelo India Women's Kickboxing League - North Zone Kickboxing Tournament 2026, held at the Gymnasium Hall, University of Jammu.

The national-level women's kickboxing championship is being organised by the Kickboxing Association of Jammu & Kashmir (KAJK) under the aegis of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Khelo India.

The tournament is wit-



BJP J&K UT Vice President Rekha Mahajan along with players during the league.

nessing participation of around 600 women athletes and 100 officials from nine States and Union Territories of the North Zone, making it one of the largest women's kickboxing events in the region.

Addressing the gathering, Rekha Mahajan, as

the Guest of Honour, on the second day warmly welcomed the women athletes and officials and lauded their dedication, discipline, and determination. She said that women today are excelling in every field, especially in sports, and such platforms provide them the confidence

to showcase their talent at national and international levels.

"Events like this not only promote fitness and competitive spirit but also inspire young girls to dream big and break barriers," Rekha Mahajan said. She appreciated the efforts of the organisers

for promoting women's sports in Jammu and Kashmir and termed the tournament a significant step towards women empowerment and youth development in the region.

Earlier, a welcome address was delivered by Abhishek Jain, General Secretary, Kickboxing Association of Jammu & Kashmir.

Organiser Rajat Sharma, Pushkar Sharma Mandal President BJP, Gaurav Chopra, Vice President, KAJK, along with Deputy Directors Mamta Sharma and Savita Chauhan, were also present on the occasion and encouraged the participants for their enthusiastic involvement in the championship.

J&K settles for silver as Rajasthan lifts 69th NSG U-14 Boys Cricket title

STATE TIMES NEWS

SIKAR: In a thrilling summit clash that went down to the wire, Jammu and Kashmir's young cricketers fought valiantly before bowing out by a razor-thin margin of 13 runs to Rajasthan, clinching the Silver medal in the 69th National School Games U-14 Boys Cricket Tournament. Hosted by the Government of Rajasthan under the aegis of the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) here today, the tournament showcased the rising prowess of the region's budding talents.

This prestigious event which concluded with a grand closing ceremony ON Saturday, featured 30 teams from across the nation's States and Union Territories.

J&K's triumphant journey has been nothing



J&K team receiving runner up trophy.

short of spectacular. They earlier overcame a strong Delhi side in the quarter-finals, clinching a 5-wicket victory over Telangana in the pre-quarter-finals, and dominated the league stage with convincing wins against hosts Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

In the high voltage final,

batting first, Rajasthan scored 140/5 in the stipulated 15 overs. Pratul Sharma top scored with 46 runs, while Daksh and Mohit contributed 35 and 27 runs to the total respectively.

From J&K, Faisal Amin and Shaid Ali took 2 wickets each, while Muhammad Mudrik

claimed 1 wicket.

In reply, J&K scored 127/6, thus losing the match by a narrow margin of 13 runs. Owais Ishaq top scored with 36 runs, while Haris Bin Rehman and Asif contributed 32 and 25 runs to the total respectively.

From Rajasthan Arslan was the most successful

bowler, who took 3 wickets.

Faisal Amin Pandith of J&K was declared as the best bowler of the tournament.

State President of Kisan Morcha, Hari Ram Ranwa was the chief guest in the closing ceremony, who distributed the trophies and medals among the winners and runners-up teams.

J&K team was accompanied by Suresh Singh as Coach and Adil Hussain Mir as Manager. The team competed under the proud banner of the Department of Youth Services and Sports, J&K.

Director General, Youth Services and Sports, J&K, Anuradha Gupta, extended heartfelt congratulations to the squad for this landmark achievement.

J&K-Kerala U-23 CK Nayudu clash teeters on spinners' grip

STATE TIMES NEWS

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Jammu and Kashmir edged a razor-thin 9-run lead with a first-innings total of 174, but Kerala's second-innings fightback to 164/5 left the U-23 Men's CK Nayudu Trophy encounter delicately poised at St Xavier's College Ground here today.

Resuming from 70/2, J&K navigated a spin-heavy pitch to post their modest total. Skipper Shivansh Sharma anchored the innings with a resolute 45 off 90 balls, laced with six boundaries, while Kamaksh's blistering cameo ignited the top order before his departure. Udhay Partap added a crucial 38 off 78 balls (5x4), with Arnav Gupta (13) and Basit Nazir (11) providing resistance.

Kerala's bowlers ruled the roost: left-arm spinner JS Anuraj claimed 4/39, off-spinner Shoun Roger snatched 3/32, and medium-pace Pavan Raj mopped up 2/27 to dismantle the innings.

In reply, Kerala reached stumps at 164/5, propelled by Ahammed Imran's unbeaten 68 off 109

balls (7x4)-a sheet-anchor of composure. Manav Krishna (15*) held firm alongside him, after Varun Nayanan's enterprising 41 laid the platform. J&K's left-arm spinners struck back decisively: Sarvashish Singh (3/32) and Vishal Kumar (2/54) throttled the run flow, keeping the contest on a knife-edge.

Earlier on Day 1, Kerala opted to bat but imploded to 165 all out in 64.2 overs. Imran top-scored with 43 off 70 balls (5x4), backed by wicketkeeper Varun Nayanan (32), skipper Abijith Praveen V (24), and Rohan Nair (24).

J&K's Sarvashish Singh emerged as the destroyer-in-chief, his marathon 14.2 overs reaping 5 wickets to shatter the batting order: Left-arm pacer Basit Bashir (2/19) and left-arm orthodox spinner Vishal Kumar (2/37) applied the squeeze, with right-arm seamer Atif Bin Mushtaq chipping in (1/24).

With spinners dictating terms on a wearing surface, the remaining two days' play promises a tense finale in this Col CK Nayudu thriller.

**Lieutenant Governor,
Jammu & Kashmir**

**LOK BHAVAN
JAMMU-180001/SRINAGAR-19001**

MESSAGE

On the occasion of the 16th National Voters' Day, I extend my heartfelt greetings to all the citizens and commend the citizens, Election Commission of India, Electoral officials, and every stakeholder, who contributes to the conduct of free, fair, and inclusive elections. This day is celebrated every year to mark the foundation day of Election commission of India established on 25th January 1950.

The Theme for National Voters' Day this year is "My India My Vote" with the tagline of "Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy" which signifies the importance of citizens as voters for Nation building and strengthening of democracy. National Voters' Day serves as a reminder of the immense responsibility we share in preserving the strength and vibrancy of our democracy. Voting is not merely a right; it is a civic duty that empowers every citizen to shape the nation's future. It is therefore essential that every eligible individual finds their rightful place on the electoral rolls.

This year, particular emphasis is being laid on the Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls, an exercise fundamental towards maintaining the accuracy, integrity, and inclusiveness of our voter lists. I urge all eligible citizens, especially first-time voters, women, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and members of marginalized or mobile populations to actively verify their enrolment and update their details, wherever required.

Election Department has made enrolment easier and more accessible through door-to-door verification, special camps, awareness programmes, and digital platforms such as the Voter Helpline App and National Voters' Service Portal. A complete and authentic electoral roll is the foundation of credible elections. I strongly urge community leaders, educational institutions; civil society, and youth organizations to support the ongoing revision process and help ensure that no eligible voter is left behind.

Let us renew our shared commitment towards strengthening participatory democracy and preserving the constitutional values that unite us. I urge everyone to enroll, verify, and exercise their franchise with pride and responsibility.

Manoj Sinha
(Manoj Sinha)

**Chief Secretary,
Jammu & Kashmir**

MESSAGE

My warm greetings to all citizens, government departments, and election officials on the occasion of the 16th National Voters' Day. This day is a celebration of the power of the vote an instrument, through which every individual participates in the governance and progress of our nation.

The theme of National Voters' Day this year, "My India My vote" reminds us that every vote matters and inclusive participation is mandatory for healthy democracy. The Election Commission of India has taken several initiatives to ensure that No eligible voter is left behind and special focus has been on facilitating participation of woman voters, senior citizens, persons with disability, first time voters, migrant voters, service voters and other marginal sections through technology driven interventions and voter friendly reforms.

Continued efforts towards purification of electoral rolls including pre revision activities and intensive outreach programmes are essential to maintain the integrity and accuracy of electoral processes. I specially welcome our young and first time voters who represent the future of our nation and democracy, to get themselves enrolled and exercise their franchise in future with responsibility, awareness and pride.

Let us all resolve to actively participate in the electoral process not just on polling day but be associated with it at all steps to be informed and responsible citizens, through use of digital platforms such as Voters Helpline App and National Voters' Service Portal besides cooperating in door-to-door verification and attending the special camps, awareness programmes being organized by Election machinery. I urge all residents to make full use of these services and take an active part in this democratic process.

For healthy democracy let us pledge to play our role to ensure that no eligible voter is left out and no ineligible voter is enrolled, for this let us work together with commitment and responsibility, to uphold the democratic ideals enshrined in our constitution.

Atal Dulloo
(Atal Dulloo, IAS)

**Chief Electoral Officer, J&K
Principal Secretary to Government
Election Department
Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir**

MESSAGE

On the momentous occasion of the 16th National Voters' Day, I extend greetings to all the citizens, election machinery, and stakeholders. National Voters' Day is not only a celebration of the right to vote but also a reaffirmation of our collective resolve to ensure that every eligible citizen is duly enrolled and empowered to participate in the electoral process.

This year's theme highlights the continuous efforts of the Election Commission of India to make our electoral system inclusive, accurate, and transparent. In this spirit, we must place special emphasis on the ongoing preparatory activities for Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls, which is a vital exercise for ensuring the purification of Electoral Rolls that no eligible voter is left behind.

All are requested to come forward and verify their entries in the electoral roll. Updating one's information, registering afresh, or correcting any errors is essential for building credible voters' list. I also appeal Political Parties, Educational Institutions, Civil Society Organizations, and Local Bodies to actively support this drive and help disseminate accurate information at the grassroots levels.

Our field teams, comprising EROs, AEROS, BLO Supervisors, BLOs and other allied staff are working with utmost dedication to make registration accessible, through door-to-door verification, special camps, and digital platforms such as Voter Helpline App and National Voters' Service Portal, I urge upon every citizen to make full use of these facilities and participate, wholeheartedly, in this important democratic exercise.

On this National Voters' Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to the core principle of "MY INDIA MY VOTE" by ensuring a complete, clean, and inclusive electoral roll, which is the bedrock of a strong democracy. Let us work together to ensure that every eligible citizen is registered, every voice is heard, and every vote strengthens the future of our great nation.

Sanjeev Verma
(Sanjeev Verma)

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