

Romesh Sharma powers J&K to glory at Masters Games

Ace shuttler bags triple gold as team wins 11 medals

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a remarkable and inspiring achievement, the Masters Badminton team from Jammu and Kashmir proudly brought home eleven medals from the 7th Masters National Games held in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh. The prestigious event, organized by the Masters Games Association Himachal Pradesh under the aegis of the Super Masters Games and Sports Federation (India), saw fierce competition from masters athletes across the country, but it was the spirited contingent from Jammu and Kashmir that emerged as a shining example of experience, resilience, and sportsmanship.

At the heart of this historic performance was Romesh Sharma, a seasoned and highly respected badminton player who showcased his exceptional skills and determination by winning three gold medals. Competing in the Men's Singles 60-64 age category, he delivered a commanding performance to



Romesh Sharma along with organisers and others during the event.

secure gold, then paired with Joginder Paul Sharma to win the Men's Doubles 60-64 title, and finally teamed up with Khema Gupta to triumph in the Mixed Doubles 55-59 category. His incredible hat-trick of gold medals set the tone for the team's success and inspired fellow players to raise their game.

Adding to the gold medal tally, Khema Gupta claimed a victory in the Women's Singles 50-54 age category, displaying her own brand of dominance and finesse on the court. Joginder Paul Sharma earned a well-fought silver in

the Men's Singles 60-64, complementing his gold with Romesh in the doubles.

The pair of Amit Singh and Akashdeep clinched silver in Men's Doubles 30-34, while Sandeep Gupta and Khema Gupta earned silver in Mixed Doubles 45-49.

The team's strength and depth were further demonstrated by four bronze medals. Akashdeep secured a bronze in Men's Singles 30-34, Ankush Jamwal took bronze in Men's Singles 35-39, Jasvinder Singh earned bronze in Mixed Doubles 55-59, and Jai Swroop Sharma

won bronze in Men's Singles 55-59. Tanu Sadhotra participated in Women's Singles 35-39. These results reflect a balanced team effort, where each athlete contributed to a collective performance marked by grit and commitment.

Ranjeet Singh Chib, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Masters Games Association (JKMGA) and an ex-international handball player, expressed immense pride in the team's achievements. He emphasized that their success is not only a personal triumph for the

players but also a proud moment for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

He highlighted the vital role played by institutions like the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, led by Rajinder Singh Tara, the J&K Police, and the Secretary of the J&K Sports Council, whose consistent support and proactive efforts have created a thriving environment for athletes to grow and compete at the highest levels.

Chib further noted that the accomplishments of these master players serve as a powerful reminder that excellence in sport is ageless and that with the right encouragement and infrastructure, athletes can continue to achieve greatness regardless of the stage in their career.

The 12-medal haul by Jammu and Kashmir's Masters Badminton team is more than just a victory—it is a celebration of enduring spirit, dedication, and the unbreakable bond between passion and performance.

International Cricket Club Jammu wins cricket tournament



DDC Bishnah Davinder Kumar presenting trophy to winner team.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a spirited celebration of cricket and community, the 1st International Cricket Tournament concluded at Badhori Ground in Samba District, drawing together sixteen teams in a showcase of talent and sportsmanship.

The event was inaugurated with enthusiasm, graced by the presence of Davinder Kumar, DDC Bishnah, as the Chief Guest, and Srujit Singh Charak, General Secretary of BJP Border Area J&K, as the Guest of Honour.

The tournament's final match featured a thrilling contest between

International Cricket Club Jammu and Samba XI Cricket Club.

Opting to bat first after winning the toss, Samba XI set a target of 130 runs. In response, International Cricket Club Jammu showcased a robust batting performance, achieving the target in just over 17 overs with four wickets down. Suresh led the charge with a commendable 40 runs off 30 balls, supported by Pawan Dev and Bikram, who contributed 40 and 35 runs respectively. Suresh also excelled with the ball, claiming five wickets in four overs, while Rajeev added two wickets to the tally.

The post-match prize dis-

tribution ceremony was a moment of pride, with Habeeb Chaudhary, a renowned cricketer from J&K, serving as the Chief Guest, and Pankul Vaid as the Guest of Honour. Suresh was rightfully named Man of the Match for his all-round performance, and Bikram received the Best Batsman of the Tournament award.

The successful organization of the tournament was attributed to the dedicated efforts of Vijay Singh, Senior BJP Leader, and Gotam Singh Jamwal, Ex-Sarpanch, whose contributions were instrumental in bringing this cricketing event to fruition.

J&K's Amarjit wins bronze at Junior National Wrestling Championship

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a remarkable display of strength and determination, Amarjit from Jammu and Kashmir secured the bronze medal in the 82 kg freestyle category at the Junior National Wrestling Championship held at the Raghurai Indoor Sports Complex in Kota.

This prestigious event witnessed participation from the nation's most promising young wrestlers. SSP Dushyant Singh extended his heartfelt congratulations to Amarjit, acknowledging his hard work and the pride he brings to Jammu and Kashmir. Coaches Vireshwar Bhardwaj and Aditya Singh, who were present at the event, expressed



immense pride in Amarjit's performance, emphasizing his dedication and the bright future ahead. Amarjit's achievement not only highlights his personal dedication and skill but also brings pride to the Jammu and Kashmir wrestling community. His success serves as an inspi-

ration to aspiring athletes in the region, demonstrating that with perseverance and hard work, excellence in sports is attainable. The championship concluded with Haryana dominating the team rankings across all three styles—freestyle, Greco-Roman, and women's wrestling—underscoring their strong wrestling program. Amarjit's bronze medal adds to the growing list of accomplishments by athletes from Jammu and Kashmir on the national stage, signaling a bright future for sports in the Union Territory. The entire Jammu and Kashmir wrestling community celebrates this achievement, looking forward to more such successes in the future.

BBAJK conducts weighing for bodybuilders

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Body Builders Association Jammu and Kashmir (BBAJK) on Wednesday conducted the weigh-in ceremony for over 130 participants at International Gym, Rehari Colony, Jammu, on Wednesday.

The event marks a key milestone in the lead-up to the much-anticipated 25th Silver Jubilee Mr. J&K Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Championship 2025, scheduled to take place on April 26 at the Police Auditorium, Gulshan Ground, Jammu.

Bodybuilders across men's, women's, and masters categories lined up, their hard work and training evident in



BBAJK Officials along with body builders posing for photograph.

every flex and form, ready to compete not just for titles—but for honor, pride, and personal triumph.

The weighing process was overseen by Rajesh Dutta, a prominent figure in the state's fitness fraternity, who reaf-

firmed BBAJK's vision of promoting a drug-free, health-conscious lifestyle among the youth.

"Our mission is to ignite the passion for fitness through structured competitions, expert training, and natural practices. Events like these channel energy into excellence," Dutta emphasized.

He further noted that BBAJK annually conducts district and state-level championships to motivate young individuals to embrace clean health practices, guided by seasoned coaches and certified trainers.

The event also witnessed the active presence and support of several key personalities in the bodybuilding and fitness circuit, including Vinay Sharma, Sanjay Bali, Naresh Gupta, Vimal Jit, Ajit Singh, Javed Bhatti, Kamal Singh, and Krishan Lal.

SMVDU student Gourav Kapoor qualifies GATE 2025

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATRA: Gourav Kapoor, son of Rajinder Paul Kapoor and Anjana Kapoor, resident of Jammu, a student of M.Tech Mechanical Engineering (Smart Manufacturing) Batch 2024 from School of Mechanical Engineering, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) qualified Graduate Aptitude Test of Engineering (GATE) in Production & Industrial Engineering conducted by IIT Roorkee, the result of which is declared by the National Coordination board (NCB)-GATE. He has secured All India rank 413 with 39.67 marks in general category with the cut off marks being 35.6. Dr. Yatheshth Anand, Head School of Mechanical Engineering along with other faculty members congratulated on his remarkable achievement and wished him all the best for future endeavors.



Maj Gen Anupinder Bevli visits Combined Annual Training Camp at NTA Nagrota

STATE TIMES NEWS

NAGROTA: Major General Anupinder Bevli, Additional Director General, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Directorate, visited the Combined Annual Training Camp (CATC S1) organized by 1 J&K Girls Battalion NCC, Srinagar, at the National Training Academy (NTA), Nagrota.

During his visit, Maj Gen Bevli reviewed the ongoing training sessions and camp



Major General Anupinder Bevli, Additional Director General, J&K and Ladakh Directorate during visited to Combined Annual Training Camp at Nagrota.

activities.

He was first presented with a splendid Guard of Honour by the cadets, which he inspected with great appreciation and complimented the cadets on their impeccable turnout and discipline.

He observed the tent-pitching exercise conducted by cadets from various institutions and encouraged them to strive for excellence. The General Officer also inspected the

academic classes being conducted and witnessed the live firing practice by the cadets, commending their enthusiasm and focus.

Maj Gen Bevli later held a separate session with the Associate NCC Officers (ANOs) and Permanent Instructors (PI Staff), where he motivated them to continue working diligently for the overall development and grooming of the cadets.

He also interacted with both staff and cadets, seek-

ing their suggestions for improving the functioning of the academy and training programs.

In his concluding remarks, Maj Gen Bevli praised the efforts of all individuals involved in organizing and conducting the camp.

He lauded the high standards of discipline, training, and teamwork on display and encouraged everyone to continue striving for excellence.

Indian athletes condemn Pahalgam terror attack, some demand end of sporting ties with Pakistan

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India's sporting fraternity oscillated between grief and rage as it joined the nation in condemning the deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam with some demanding that the country should cut all sports ties with Pakistan.

On Tuesday, terrorists opened fire at a prime tourist location in south Kashmir's Pahalgam, killing at least 26 civilians and injuring several others. The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli expressed shock as they mourned the loss of lives.

"The affected families must be going through an unimaginable ordeal - India and the world stand united with them at this dark hour, as we mourn the loss of lives and pray for justice," Tendulkar wrote.

"Heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims. Praying for peace and strength to families all those who lost their lives and justice to be served for their cruel act," Kohli posted on his Instagram.

Similar sentiments were expressed by other top players such as Jasprit Bumrah and Shreyas Kumar Yadav. Pacer Mohammed Siraj posted an emotional message in which he

called for justice. "To target and kill innocent civilians in the name of religion is pure evil..."

No cause, no belief, no ideology can ever justify such a monstrous act. Yeh kaisi ladai hai... jahaan insaan ki jaan ki kor keemat hi nahi (what sort of a fight is this in which there is no value for human life)," he asked.

"I hope this madness ends soon and these terrorists are found and punished, without mercy," he added.

Former India cricketer Shreevats Goswami wrote a strongly-worded post, demanding an end to all sporting ties with Pakistan.

"And this is exactly why I say - you don't play cricket with Pakistan. Not now. Not ever. When BCCI or the government refused to send India to the Champions Trophy in Pakistan, some had the audacity to say, 'Oh, but sport should rise above politics,'" Goswami wrote.

"...murdering innocent Indians seems to be Pakistan's national sport and India should respond with zero tolerance and not with bats and balls," he added.

While India has not played bilateral cricket with Pakistan since 2012-13, and the BCCI declined to send its team for the Champions Trophy earlier this year, other Indian teams have continued to travel to

Pakistan for international events.

Goswami, who had recently visited Pahalgam, said he had sensed hope and peace returning to the valley.

"And now... this bloodshed again. It breaks something inside you. It makes you question how many more times we're expected to stay silent, stay 'sporting,' while our people die. No more. Not this time," he added.

An "outraged" Olympic bronze medal-winning boxer and ruling BJP member Vijender Singh also called for firm "action".

"Our brave soldiers will definitely give a befitting reply to this cowardly attack in the coming times. In the presence of the brave sons of Mother India, the plans of those who want to disturb the peace in Jammu and Kashmir will never succeed," he asserted.

Indian cricket team head coach and former BJP MP Gautam Gambhir wrote: "Praying for the families of the deceased. Those responsible for this will pay. India will strike."

Two-time Olympic medal-winning badminton player PV Sindhu too penned down an emotional post.

"My heart aches for the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack. So much pain. So much loss. No reason, no cause can ever justify such brutality."

"To the families left behind --

your grief is beyond words, but you are not alone. We are with you. In these dark moments, may we find strength in each other, and never let go of the hope that peace will return!" Sindhu wrote.

Olympic gold medalist duo of javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra and Abhinav Bindra prayed for the victims.

"Heartbroken by the tragic attack in Jammu & Kashmir: Prayers for the victims and their families," Chopra wrote.

"Heartbroken by the horrific terrorist attack in Pahalgam. My thoughts are with the victims and their families. Terror has no place in our world, we must stand united against hatred and violence," Bindra added.

The attack is the deadliest terrorist act in the valley since the 2019 Pulwama strike.

"Strongly condemn this cowardly act by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists. India stands united with our brave Army, J&K Police, and Paramilitary forces in the fight against terrorism. Justice will prevail," said former India all-rounder Suresh Raina.

"My heart goes out to family members of all those who lost their lives in dastardly attack. This can't be forgiven," former India spinner Harbhajan Singh wrote.

Olympic medal-winning former hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, shuttler Saina

Nehwal and two-time world champion boxer Nikhat Zareen also called for justice.

"Condemnation is not enough, justice must follow. Our hearts bleed for Pahalgam. Terror must never win. Prayers for all affected in the Pahalgam attack," Sreejesh wrote.

"The Pahalgam terror attack is a heartbreaking reminder of the threats we continue to face. To those spreading fear - know that India stands united, and justice will prevail. Jai Hind," Saina posted.

Zareen added, "Those who attack innocents attack humanity itself. Strongly condemn the cowardly terror attack in Pahalgam. Justice must be swift."

Former India wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel said he was left numb by the terrible act.

"Shocked and angry to hear what happened in Kashmir. While those responsible will be punished, right now there's a numb disbelief at the terrible acts and the manner in which it all happened," Parthiv wrote.

The Indian batting duo of Shubman Gill and KL Rahul and former spinner and India captain Anil Kumble also offered their condolences.

"Innocent lives lost to senseless violence. Praying for strength and peace for the affected families. Let's stand together against hate," he wrote.

Humpy wins FIDE Women's Grand Prix chess meet

STATE TIMES NEWS

PUNE: Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy won the FIDE Women's Grand Prix 2024-25 (Pune leg) title on the basis of her superior tie-breaks over Zhu Jiner of China after the two players were tied for the top spot here on Wednesday.

Humpy, who regained the women's World Rapid Chess Championship after a gap of five years in New York in December last, beat Bulgarian player Nurgul Salimova in the ninth and final-round game to end on seven points, the same as Zhu who beat Russia's Polina Shuvalova.

"Humpy Koneru and Zhu Jiner both won their final round games and ended the FIDE Women's Grand Prix tied for first, but it's Humpy who takes the top spot thanks to superior tiebreaks!" wrote FIDE on 'X'.

The 37-year-old Humpy will, however, get the same prize and Grand Prix points -- 117.5 -- as Zhu from the fifth leg of the tournament.

"After long time, I achieved a good result in Classical Chess and I am also gaining rating points. I have always believed

that luck always favours the best player. I will be participating in a few events this year," said Humpy.

Wildcard entrant Divya Deshmukh logged 5.5 points to finish third. The 19-year-old Indian scored four victories, three draws and lost two games -- to Humpy and Zhu.

Nurgul adopted the Slav Defence against Humpy who appeared in an attacking mood. A rook move on the 16th move by Nurgul did not help her cause and Humpy intensified the pressure on the King side to hold advantage from the 19th move.

Nurgul tried to defend but Humpy, a two-time Asian Games gold medalist, pressed on to win after 84 moves.

Alina Kashlinskaya employed the French Defence against Divya and the draw was sealed after 42 moves when both the players had a rook and three pawns.

The Polina versus Zhu contest started in an Italian opening where the Chinese player dominated for almost the entire duration of the 76 moves.

There are a total of six legs in the Women's Grand Prix with each player playing a maximum of

three legs.

Points are awarded based on the placings they secure. Two players with the highest cumulative points get direct entry to the Women's Candidates.

The Candidates event is contested between eight players with the winner earning the right to challenge the world champion for the title.

The sixth and final leg is scheduled in Austria in May. The outright winner of the event will garner 130 points, while shared places will fetch lesser points.

Aleksandra Goryachkina of Russia, with 308.8 points, has virtually sealed her place for the Candidates, while Humpy has tallied 279.17 points after competing in three legs. Ukrainian GM Anna Muzychuk has tallied 189.17 points and will play in one more event.

Results (Round 9): R Vaishali (4) drew with Melia Salome (3); Koneru Humpy (7) bt Salimova Nurgul (3.5); Divya Deshmukh (5.5) drew with Kashlinskaya Alina (3); Shuvalova Polina (4.5) lost to Zhu Jiner (7); Dronavalli Harika (4.5) drew with Munguntuul Batkhuyag (3).