

VAJK honours J&K volleyball team after historic gold medal win at KIYG

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JAMMU: In a moment of immense pride for the Union Territory, the Jammu and Kashmir Volleyball boys team was honoured at Lemon Tree Hotel, Jammu, by the Volleyball Association of J&K (VAJK) for their historic gold medal victory in the 7th edition of the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG), held in May 2025 at Patna, Bihar. This remarkable achievement marks the first-ever gold medal for J&K in the team-wise volleyball event at KIYG.

The felicitation ceremony was held in a grand yet emotionally charged environment, celebrating the dedication, discipline, and sheer willpower of the players who brought glory to the region.

The President of VAJK, Sidharth Daluja, led the function and honoured the players and officials with shawls and cash prizes amounting to Rs 72,000.

The J&K team's journey in the KIYG tournament was filled with challenges and triumphs. After consecutive wins in the pool stage-first defeating Uttarakhand in a thrilling 3-2 match (18-25, 25-20, 16-25, 27-25, 15-09), followed by a smooth 3-0 win against Bihar (25-21, 25-19, 25-23)-the team lost to Uttar Pradesh 1-3 (25-14, 25-21, 18-25, 25-20), but maintained its momentum and reached the semi-finals



Patron-in-Chief of VAJK, Raj Daluja, President, Sidharth Daluja and office bearers with gold medal winner J&K volleyball team at felicitation ceremony in Jammu.

for the first time, breaking all previous records.

In the semi-finals, the J&K team displayed flawless coordination and strategy, overpowering Manipur 3-0 (27-25, 25-21, 25-19), securing a historic berth in the finals. The grand finale saw a spirited rematch against Uttar Pradesh, and this time, the J&K boys turned the tables with a dominant 3-1 victory (35-33, 19-25, 25-17, 25-21), claiming the gold medal with resilience and excellence.

The winning squad included: Sahib Kalear (Arnia), Akash Manhas (Pargval),

Ganik Sharma (Kathua), Sahil Shamim (Anantnag), Nasir Ajaz Sofi (Baramulla), Wani Mahir (Srinagar), Abid Gulzar (Ganderbal), Bilal Ahmed (Poonch), Karan Rajput (Reasi), Kunal Gorean (STC Jammu), Rehan Parvez (Poonch), Mohit (Samba), and Sandeep (Pallanwala). Subash Shastri served as the team Manager, with Naresh Kumar as the Head Coach, and Prateek Kumar and Shubham Sharma as Assistant Coaches.

Prior to the competition, the players underwent rigorous training and condition-

ing at MA Stadium, Jammu, under the expert guidance of the coaching panel of volleyball coaches Naresh Kumar, Prateek and Shubham Sharma.

The selection was carried out by a panel of experts nominated by the J&K Sports Council, and players drawn from different districts were groomed to enhance their skills, including advanced techniques, service, defence, and spikes.

Sidharth Daluja expressed heartfelt gratitude to Nuzhat Gul, Secretary of the J&K Sports Council, for her unwavering support and

cooperation to the team for their excellent performance in team-wise event in KIYG. Kuldip Magotra CEO, H.S Gill Executive Vice President, Ramesh Sharma Treasurer, V.K Magotra General Secretary of the Volleyball Association of J&K also lauded the team for excellent performance and for bringing laurels to J&K UT and Association which was unprecedented in history J&K.

Sidharth Daluja honoured players & officials who added another star in the crown of J&K by breaking all previous records in Sports arena in

team wise Mega event Khelo India Youth Games held recently in Bihar.

During his address, Sidharth Daluja called upon the youth to utilise every opportunity to explore and sharpen their talents, both in sports and academics. He reiterated the association's commitment to promote volleyball in every corner of Jammu and Kashmir and urged the younger generation to stay away from drugs and contribute to nation-building.

Raj Daluja, Patron-in-Chief of VAJK, graced the event as Chief Guest. He

emphasized the transformative power of sports in shaping the future of the youth and encouraged all stakeholders to actively participate in team sports, especially volleyball, to strive for excellence at the national level.

He appreciated the joint efforts of the J&K Sports Council, Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS), and Sports Authority of India (SAI) in helping the team reach this milestone.

Among the dignitaries present were Manmeet Singh (Joint Secretary),

Akbar Ali (Secretary, VAJK), Neelofar Habib (Secretary, Kulgam District Volleyball Association), and Veena Kumari (Executive Member, VAJK).

The event began with a two-minute silence in memory of Madan Lal Toofan, Vice President of VAJK, who passed away recently, paying homage to his contributions to the sport.

The function concluded with a call to continue the momentum and build upon this unprecedented success, aiming for even greater accomplishments in the future.

Patron YSCC Doda meets Saurabh Bhagat

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DODA: Manzoor Ahmed Batt, Patron of Young Star Cricket Club (YSCC) Doda - a registered NGO and a prominent sports and youth engagement organization from the Doda district - met Saurabh Bhagat in Srinagar to personally congratulate him on his recent appointment as Commissioner Secretary, Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Government of Jammu and Kashmir. During the meeting, Batt extended his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Shri Bhagat and prayed for his continued success in public service. He praised Bhagat's impressive administrative record and expressed confidence that his leadership would bring positive changes to the department, ensuring greater efficiency, transparency, and service delivery. In response, Bhagat warmly acknowledged the gesture and assured Batt that he would give special attention to the issues faced by the people of Doda, particularly in matters related to food distribution and consumer affairs. He further expressed his affection for the people of Doda and shared his intention to visit the district soon to better understand local challenges and connect directly with the community. It is pertinent to mention that Saurabh Bhagat has previously served as Commissioner Secretary to the Government, Science and Technology Department, and held the additional charge of Administrative Secretary, Information Technology Department, J&K. His vast experience in governance and his commitment to technology-driven public service reforms have earned him wide respect across administrative circles. YSCC Doda, known for its continuous efforts in youth development, sports promotion, and social initiatives in the region, expressed optimism that under Bhagat's leadership, the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs will take meaningful steps to address longstanding concerns of the people of Doda and across the Union Territory.



JKMGA felicitates Master Athletes & Sports promoters, salutes icons who inspire beyond age

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JAMMU: In a heartfelt celebration of perseverance, passion, and athletic excellence, the Jammu & Kashmir Masters Games Association (JKMGA) organized a felicitation program at the Amar Singh Club, here on Sunday.

The event was inaugurated by Ranjit Singh Chib, former SSP, international handball player, and President of JKMGA, who emphasized the importance of Master Games in promoting lifelong fitness and breaking stereotypes about aging.

The primary objective of the program was to promote Master Games, specifically designed for athletes aged 30 and above. These games aim to instil a competitive spirit while encouraging physical well-being among experienced sportspersons.

Speaking at the event, Ranjit Singh Chib highlighted how master athletes continue to inspire all generations by proving that age is no barrier to excellence.

The program honored the conveners of the 7th National Masters Games held in Dharanashala, where 110 players from Jammu participated across 11 different sports and brought home an impressive total of 87 medals- 44 gold, 28 silver, and 15 bronze. The conveners recognized included Ajay Sharma (Athletics), David Sandhu (Swimming), Late Virinder Sharma (Judo), Er. Rajiv Sharma (Table Tennis), Dayal Singh (Weightlifting), Ramesh Sharma (Badminton), Bhanu Pratap and Mousami Verma (Basketball), Anil Abrol (Chess), and Neete Kaur (Powerlifting and Handball).

Also honored during the event were Dr. Sonia Chib for her valuable physiotherapy services and Chef-de-Mission Praval Sharma along with Rameshwar Singh Manhas, Chairman R.S



J&K Masters Games Association members with others at felicitation ceremony.

Sports Academy Miran Sahib for their roles in promoting sports.

The recognition extended to other outstanding contributors including Sandeep Gupta, Badminton Captain and Regional Director of IGNOU Jammu, Mamta Bajaj, Captain of the 40+ Handball team and international player, Renu Ratan, International handball player, and Vinay Sharma, a respected handball coach.

A proud moment for the region was the recognition of Tajinder Singh, DIG in J&K Police, who brought laurels by winning a bronze medal in the 7th National Masters Games.

His achievement was celebrated as a fine example of how even the most demanding professional roles can coexist with high levels of sporting performance.

A particularly proud moment for the region was the recognition of Neete Kaur, General Secretary of JKMGA, who made history by becoming the first woman from Jammu & Kashmir to participate in the World Masters Games held in Taipei in 2025.

As the captain of the women's handball team, she brought immense pride to the region and

was honored for her groundbreaking achievement.

Neete Kaur also took the opportunity to highlight the growing success of the Masters Games in Jammu & Kashmir, with 20 active games being played across the union territory and participation in 11 national-level disciplines.

She praised the media for their crucial role in promoting the movement and helping bring recognition to the efforts of these athletes.

In recognition of their contributions to the promotion of Masters Games in Jammu & Kashmir, the association also honored prominent sports journalists including Vikas Abrol, Vivek Sharma, Ranjit Thakur, Sanjay Puri, Ratan Sharma, Vivek Suri, Kunal Duggar, Sanjeev Sharma, and Raj Kumar.

President Ranjit Singh extended a heartfelt thank you to all media personnel for their consistent support and coverage.

The evening's most celebrated moment was the special felicitation of Romesh Sharma, a seasoned and highly respected badminton player for showcasing exceptional skill and determination by winning three gold medals in the

Seventh National Masters Games. His achievements serve as a shining example of dedication and excellence in the sport.

JKMGA also felicitated Danish Yousuf, a JKP athlete, who was awarded the title of Best Athlete of the Seventh National Masters Games. Danish won five gold medals in five events and set two national records-completing the 100-meter dash in 10.9 seconds and the 200-meter dash in 22.0 seconds. His achievements were hailed as extraordinary and a source of inspiration for athletes across the country.

The program was attended by a host of dignitaries and sports supporters, including Deepak Honda and Ranjit Singh Nalwa, who graced the occasion as special guests, along with Romesh Sharma, Kuljit Singh Janwal, Somraj Gupta, Rakesh Singh Salathia, Rajesh Sumbria, Meetu Singh, Pankaj Malhotra, Mohit Verma, Sudesh Raina, and Rajendra Singh.

The event was beautifully conducted by Mamta Bajaj, whose energy and passion elevated the evening's spirit.

This celebration truly embodied the spirit of sportsmanship-an occasion of the sports professionals, by the sports professionals, for the sports professionals, which is the very essence of JKMGA.

In his closing remarks, President Ranjit Singh Chib reaffirmed the association's commitment to honoring athletes, promoting the values of fitness and health, and supporting initiatives that build a stronger, healthier India through sport. The felicitation ceremony stood as a powerful reminder that age is not a limitation but a badge of experience, and that the fire to compete, to achieve, and to inspire can burn brightly at any stage of life.

Satish flags off ICC Jammu's 'Run for Peace and Innovation'

Over 400 runners participate from across India, Abroad

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JAMMU: The Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Jammu, under the leadership of its Chairman Rahul Sahai, on Sunday organized the ICC Jammu 10K & 5K Run, themed "Run for Peace & Innovation."

The run commenced from the Jammu University Sports Complex to Satwari and back, witnessing enthusiastic participation from over 400 runners.

Participants included students, entrepreneurs, professional athletes, and prominent citizens from Jammu, Punjab, Bengaluru, and even the USA-highlighting the event's wide reach and growing relevance.

The event was graced by the Minister for Youth Services, Sports & IT, Satish Sharma, Maj Gen Mukesh Bhanwala, GOC 26 INF DIV, flagged off the run as the Chief Guests, accompanied by several eminent dignitaries including Prof. Omesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu; Anuradha Gupta, Director General Youth Services, J&K; Vikas Gupta, Director Tourism, Jammu; Ajaz Qaiser, Joint Director Tourism; Kiran Radurappa, CEO of Posspole, Bengaluru;

Daud Iqbal Baba, Director Sports & Physical Education, Jammu University; and Debmalya Banerjee, Regional Director, ICC Northern Region.

Rahul Sahai, Chairman ICC Jammu, extended a warm welcome to all dignitaries, participants, and media representatives. He stated, "This run is not just about fitness-it is a symbolic stride toward positioning Jammu as a hub of innovation, startups, and entrepreneurial spirit."

Addressing the gathering, Minister Satish Sharma said, "It is heartening to see Jammu running for peace and innovation under the leadership of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, a 100-year-old national institution. I congratulate the Chamber for this visionary initiative and assure full government support to nurture innovation and startups in Jammu & Kashmir."

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor of Jammu University, congratulated ICC for launching this impactful initiative and appreciated the choice of Jammu University as the venue.

He lauded Abhyuday



Sports Minister, Satish Sharma along with other dignitaries flagging off ICC Jammu's 10K & 5K Run from JU.

Jindal, ICC National President, Rahul Sahai, and Debmalya Banerjee for their leadership.

He also noted that the theme of peace and innovation resonates with the union's core values, and assured continued institutional support.

All the dignitaries up lauded resolve and commitment of runners who ran for the cause in this weather. Results of Run are In the 10 Km category, under the Under-18 Boys, Sumant Sudan secured the first position with a time of 1 hour 4 minutes and 26 seconds, followed by Aditya Khajuria who completed the run in 1 hour 23 minutes and

36 seconds.

In the 18 to 35 age group (Male), Raghav Sharma emerged victorious clocking 41 minutes and 3 seconds, closely followed by Deepak Sharma at 41 minutes and 18 seconds, and Pankaj Sharma at 42 minutes and 34 seconds. Among the females in the same category, Rimpi Devi finished first in 1 hour 4 minutes and 42 seconds, with Sonia Sharma and Gurvinder Kour coming in second and third respectively, at 1:07:02 and 1:21:23.

For the 36 to 45 (Male) group, Ram Rakha Sangra claimed first place with a time of 42 minutes and 48 seconds, while Abhishake

Gupta and Kuldeep Kumar followed with times of 45:14 and 46:53 respectively. In the female section, Kirti topped the group at 57 minutes and 7 seconds, followed by Shreeja Slathia at 1:05:06 and Seema Sharma at 1:10:56.

In the 46 to 55 Male category, Amit Kumar led with a time of 43:15, trailed by Vijay Sharma at 44:28 and Hemanshu Parkash at 48:38. For the females, Manminder Kaur was the fastest at 48:34, Tina Sahi secured second with 59:47, and Seema Kharyal took third with 1:12:29.

Among the seniors aged 56 & Above, Sham Suri led the

men's category with a time of 52:14, while Satbir Singh and Ajay Gandotra followed with close timings of 52:24 and 52:55. In the female category, Rekha Katoch finished first in 1:11:19, Asha Chandan came second in 1:34:18, and Bhavna Kaul third in 1:52:12.

In the 5 Km race, under the Under-18 Boys, Aryan Sharma took the lead with a swift finish of 23 minutes and 46 seconds. Rahil Manhas followed with 25:07, and Himanshu Kumar clocked 28:21 for third place. In the Under-18 Girls, Shabu Devi clinched the top spot with 28:26, followed by Shabnum Bano at 32:27 and Shivali

Devi at 36:00.

In the 18 to 35 Male category, Rajat Sammotra won with an excellent time of 22 minutes flat, followed by Bharat Kumar at 22:01 and Eklove Sharma at 23:28. In the female section, Tanisha Bandral clocked 44:39 for first place, with Monika Sharma at 49:24 and Aditi Sharma at 50:48 securing the next positions.

For the 36 to 45 age group, Abhishek Sharma topped the men's category with a time of 25:44, followed by Amit Bamba and Ashish Sharma. In the women's division, Dr. Kuljit Kour completed her run in 41:37 to secure first, while Shweta Mittal and Supriya Arora followed with times of 44:05 and 49:02 respectively.

Among the 46 to 55 Male participants, Krishna Moorthi led with 28:59, followed by Jatinder Singh and others. In the female category, Bhavna Salathia finished first at 37:51, followed by Rashi Rakwal and Meenakshi Anand.

In the 56 & Above category, Dr. Sanjeev Mohan finished strong in the men's section with a time of 33:25, followed by Anand Kumara and Capt.

Shamsher Singh. Anita Verma topped the female group with a commendable time of 48:04.

Special recognition was given to Mr. Kiran Radurappa, CEO of Posspole, who travelled from Bengaluru to connect with youth and budding entrepreneurs. He expressed his commitment to guide and mentor Jammu's innovators, and assured Posspole's continued engagement with the region.

Debmalya Banerjee highlighted ICC's rich 100-year legacy, its expanding footprint in Jammu & Kashmir, and its roadmap for future development initiatives in the Union Territory.

Rahul Sahai expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Jammu administration, traffic police, sponsors, supporters, and all ambassadors of the run who contributed to the event's smooth and successful execution.

The event concluded on a high note with a clear and resonant message of peace, unity, innovation, and community-driven progress. Dignitaries collectively echoed the call to action: "Let's run together for peace, innovation, and a brighter Jammu."