



ATHLETICS FEDERATION OF INDIA

MARCH 2021

NEWSLETTER

FEDERATION CUP PERFORMANCES SHOW MOST INDIAN ATHLETES IN EXCELLENT SPACE



There has been a spate of very endearing performances when track and field competitions resumed after the long break imposed by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The best indication of such heart-warming displays came when four National records and eight Meet Records were broken in the 24th National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships in Patiala in March.

Avinash Sable (3000m Steeplechase), M Sreeshankar (Long Jump), Annu Rani (Javelin Throw) and Kamalpreet Kaur (Discus throw) accounted for the National Records while S Dhanalakshmi and Hima Das (both 200m), Gurmeet Singh (Hammer Throw) and Neeraj Chopra (Javelin Throw) raised the bar with Meet Records in the Federation Cup.

Seeking to qualify for the Olympic Games with a 64.00m throw, Annu Rani set the ball rolling with a National Record of 63.24m on the opening day of the Federation Cup in the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports complex. Sreeshankar went past the Olympic qualification mark of 8.22m with an 8.26m jump on his fifth attempt.

India's premier Steeplechaser Avinash Sable paid rich tribute to the late coach Nikolai Snegarev with a win in 8 minutes 20.20 seconds to complete a hat-trick of National Records in successive days in the Federation Cup. And after a day's lull on the National Record front, Kamalpreet Kaur rounded the meet off with a 65.06m throw.

Coming on the heels of National Records by Sandeep Kumar and Priyanka Goswami in 20km Race Walk in the National Race Walk Championships in Ranchi and Javelin Thrower Neeraj Chopra's National Record in the Indian Grand Prix III in early March, the efforts by the athletes in the Federation Cup are a reflection of the vision of the Athletics Federation of India.

There can be no doubt that the Athletics Federation of India's decision - with the support of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports as well as the Sports Authority of India - to keep the National Camps going through lockdown and later has paid off. The idea was to have the athletes in competition trim as and when events could be held in a safe and secure environment.



NEERAJ CHOPRA: NR 88.07M AT IGP-3



There were quite a few other performances that caught the eye, not the least being the sprints by S Dhanalakshmi who first handed Dutee Chand her first defeat in a National-level meet in many years in the 100m and then broke PT Usha's meet record in the 200m. Hima Das, beaten in the 200m heats by Dhanalakshmi, showed her a clean pair of heels in the final with another meet mark.

From the men's 400m perspective, Amoj Jacob (Delhi) came up with a career best time of 45.68 seconds to win the title in a race featuring more experienced runners. Karnataka ace M R Poovamma's determination helped her keep the younger runners at bay in the women's final. For good measure, Poovamma added the 800m bronze medal to her collection as well.

Harmilan Kaur Bains (Punjab) spreadeagled the women's 1500m field that included PU Chitra (Kerala) and Lili Das (West Bengal) with a personal best time of 4:08.70. It was the second fastest time for a metric mile by an Indian woman, the National Record of 4:06.03 having been set by Sunita Rani in the Busan Asian Games back in October 2002.

The athletes will return to their training bases and work towards showcasing their talent again in May-June when the domestic competitive season resumes. The AFI Planning Committee is hoping that the country's best athletes can be sent overseas to finetune their preparations for the Olympic Games.

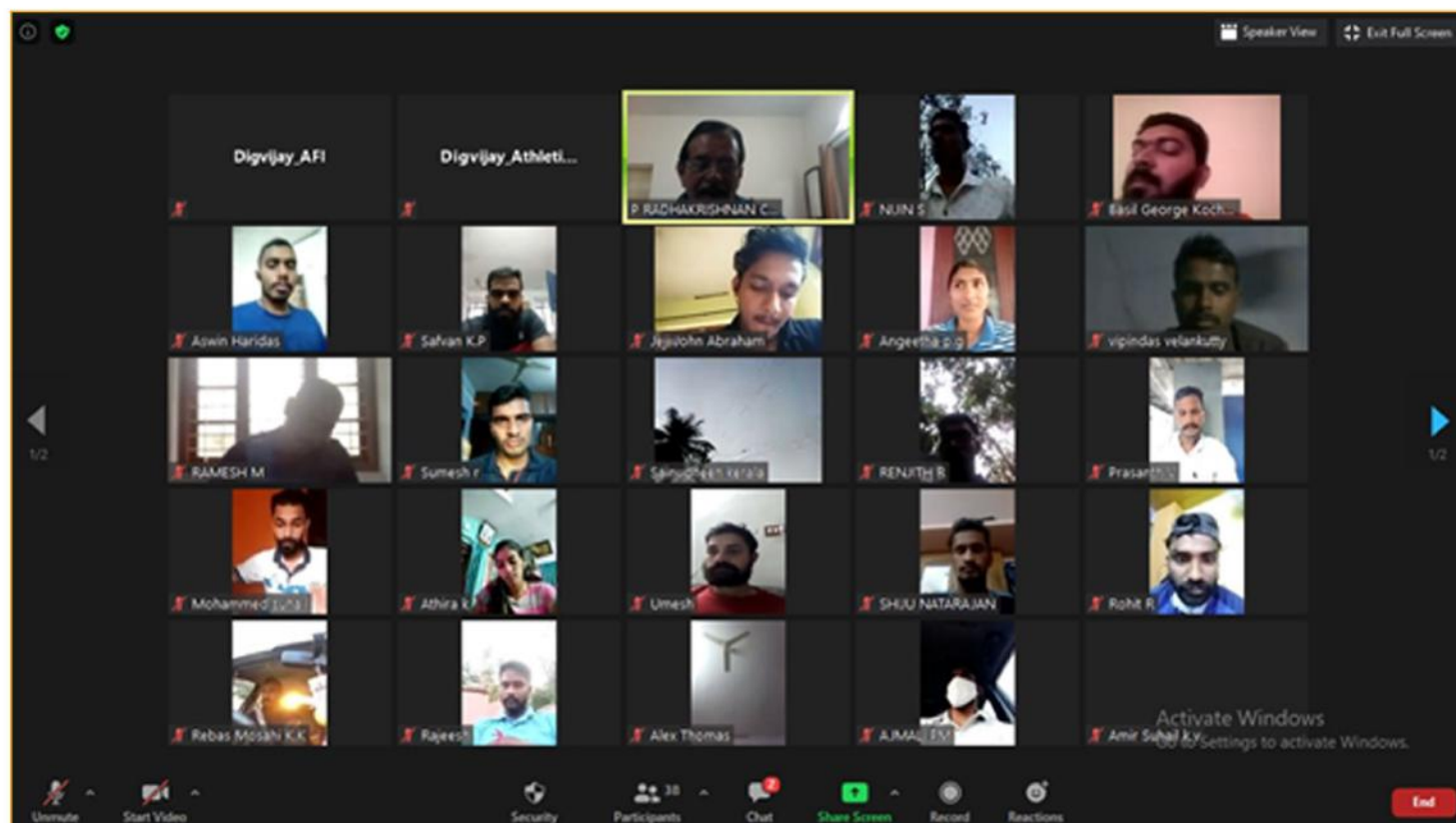


MEET RECORDS



OVER 1708 PARTICIPANTS FROM 415 DISTRICTS ATTEND AFI'S INAUGURAL PRE-LEVEL 1 COACHING COURSE

In keeping with its vision of enhancing athletics coaching at the grassroots level, the Athletics Federation of India successfully completed World Athletics-approved Pre-Level 1 Coaches Education programme for district level coaches. The inaugural Pre-Level 1 course was attended by 1708 participants from 415 districts of India from 6th February to 26th March 2021 in different batches.



AFI President Adille J. Sumraiwalla said the idea for the Foundation Course emerged from the interaction the AFI thinktank had with District Athletics Associations across the country in the past few months. "We realised that standardised coach education programmes for coaches at the grassroots level was integral to our objective of popularising athletics," he said.

"World Athletics CECS offers different levels, starting with Level 1 that produces qualified youth coaches who will be able to train and prepare teenaged athletes. This course will help coaches with training children between 12 and 16 years of age. Upon successful completion of the Pre-Level 1 Foundation course, coaches will get certificates issued by AFI," Mr. Sumraiwalla said.

The AFI President said that India now has a number of Level 1 lecturers who can impart coach education both in English and Indian languages. "Over the past couple of years, we have been very pro-active in encouraging coaches across the country to complete Level 1 and Level 2 in CECS. We are delighted with the positive response we received for participation in our inaugural Pre-Level 1 programme," he said.

"We are keen on educating athletics coaches against the dangers of early specialization and over-training. These will be among the most important components of the Pre-Level 1 course,"

Mr. Sumraiwalla said. "We have seen many cases of burn out because of early specialisation or over-training or a combination of both."

AFI President said the Federation did not specify an upper age limit for enrolling for the Foundation Course since it believed that many parents would also be keen to undertake the well-structured programme. "Our team has worked very hard to conceive the syllabus for the course, keeping parents and coaches at the grassroots level in mind," he said.

WORLD ATHLETICS LAUNCHES GLOBAL CONVERSATION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE SPORT

For the very first time in our history, World Athletics is reaching out to the entire international athletics community to participate in a Global Conversation and contribute insights and feedback that will shape the future direction of the sport for the next decade.

This year World Athletics has committed to developing a World Plan for Athletics 2022-2030 in consultation with its Member Federations and other key interest groups, including athletes, coaches, officials, fans, schools, meeting directors, partners and media.

The World Plan will be a key document for all involved in the sport, setting out a roadmap for the growth and development of athletics through to 2030.

Its purpose is to listen to the athletics community, to identify where the sport stands now throughout the world, and to establish a vision and direction for the period through to 2030, setting out how both World Athletics, its Member Federations and Area Associations, and other people involved in athletics can work together to develop and grow the sport across the world. The plan will contain clear roles and responsibilities, timelines, measurable outcomes and resource and budget implications.

GLOBAL CONVERSATION TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF ATHLETICS

By initiating the 'Global Conversation for the Future of Athletics', World Athletics wants to give everybody involved in athletics, no matter their background, role or location, an opportunity to be heard.

"Today, we are embarking on an unprecedented Global Conversation with all those who love our sport and want to have a say in its future," *World Athletics president Sebastian Coe* said.

"The global pandemic has highlighted the need and desire of governments and communities to keep fit and healthy. Athletics, as the most accessible and participated sport on the planet, has a key role in helping to achieve this. Through this global engagement phase, I want to hear from everyone who cares about athletics and about health and fitness. Our strength as a sport lies in the diversity of our community and we need to hear the voices of our key stakeholders in all of our 214 countries and territories in order to develop a plan that fully represents our global aspirations for athletics to grow and thrive over the coming years."

This worldwide campaign will run for a six-week period in the form of a survey available in 12 different languages. The responses will help to give World Athletics a clear understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead and how the athletics community envisions the present and future of the sport. Through this open stakeholder-centric project, World Athletics wants to drive a fruitful conversation by asking people to embrace the chance to speak up and help to bring further significant and necessary changes and developments to the number one Olympic sport.

A draft plan will then be developed for presentation to the World Athletics Council mid-year. Once accepted, a final plan will be distributed to the Member Federations for formal approval at the biennial World Athletics Congress in November 2021.

The process is being overseen by the World Plan Working Group, which comprises seven Council Members, chaired by former triple jump world record-holder Willie Banks, assisted by the Sports Business Group at Deloitte.

To join the conversation and help us to create the future of athletics, please [click here](#).
(World Athletics Press Release)

THE GLOBAL CONVERSATION



CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING: AN EVENT OF UNIQUE COURSES, VARYING DIFFICULTIES

(By Dr. Roy John V, AFI Technical Delegate)

Cross country running is a sport in which teams and individuals run a race on open-air courses over natural terrain such as dirt or grass. Sometimes the runners are referred to as harriers. The course, typically 4–12 kilometres long, may include surfaces of grass, and earth, pass through woodlands and open country, and include hills, flat ground and sometimes gravel road. It is both an individual and a team sport; runners are judged on individual times and teams by a points-scoring method. Both men and women of all ages compete in cross country, which usually takes place during autumn and winter, and can include weather conditions of rain, sleet, snow or hail, and a wide range of temperatures.



Photo Courtesy- tribuneindia.com

Because of the varying difficulty of courses, world records are not maintained. In scoring, the places in which team members finish (e.g., one point for first place, two points for second) are added together, and the team with the lowest total wins. The distances are standardised for World Athletics Cross Country Championships: men & women: 10km Women; U20 men: 8km and 6km for U20 women; U18 6km and 4km for U18 women. It is recommended that similar distances be used for other International and national competitions.

There is an extreme variation in which cross country is practiced throughout the world. A loop course must be designed, with the loop measuring between 1500m and 2000m. If necessary, a small loop can be added in order to adjust the distances to the required overall distances of the various events, in which case the small loop must be run in the early stages of the event. It is recommended that each long loop should have a total ascent of at least 10m. Existing natural obstacles shall be used if possible. However, very high obstacles should be avoided, as should deep ditches, dangerous ascents / descents, thick undergrowth and, in general, any obstacle which would constitute a difficulty beyond the aim of the competition. It is preferable that artificial obstacles should not be used but if such use is unavoidable, they should be made to simulate natural obstacles met within open country. In races where there are large numbers of athletes, narrow gaps or other hindrances which would deny the athletes an unhampered run shall be avoided for the first 300m. Apart from the start and finish areas, the course must not contain any other long straight. A "natural", undulating course with smooth curves and short straights is the most suitable. The general public should only be allowed to cross the course at well organised cross-over points, marshalled by stewards. It is recommended that, apart from the start and finish areas, the course be a width of 5 metres, including the obstacle areas.

Water and other suitable refreshments shall be available at the start and finish of all races. For all events, a drinking / sponging station shall be provided every lap, if weather conditions warrant such provision. If the Referee is satisfied on the report of a Judge or umpire or otherwise that an athlete has left the marked course thereby shortening the distance to be covered, they shall be disqualified.



Unless a Transponder Timing system is being used together with a backup system (such as a video recording) to check finishing orders, finish lanes ("funnels") should be set up some 8 to 10 metres after the finish line with a maximum width of 0.70-0.80m. Once in the funnels, the athletes must not be able to overtake one another. The funnels should be 35-40m long into which the athletes will be directed as they cross the finish line. At the end of each funnel, officials will note the athletes' numbers/names and if applicable recover their transponder timing chips. Judges and Timekeepers will additionally be placed on either side of the finish line and it is recommended that, in order to follow up any appeal relative to the finishing order, an official with video recording equipment (if possible with a timing clock in sight) shall be assigned and placed a few metres after the finish line in order to record the order in which the athletes cross the line.

OLYMPIAN GS RANDHAWA NOMINATED CHAIRMAN OF SELECTION COMMITTEE FOR SENIORS



The Athletics Federation of India nominated Olympian Gurbachan Singh Randhawa as the chairman of selection committee for seniors.

Announcing the members of selection committees, Adille J Sumariwalla, AFI President, said, "AFI is proud to have so many legendary athletes who are always willing to help the federation in all its important decisions. The role of each and every member of selection committee is very important and hence, we have included former athletes who have plenty of experience for this important role."

The members of selection committee are-

Seniors- GS Randhawa (chairman), Bahadur Singh, Bahadur Singh Saggu, Anju Bobby George, Uday Prabhu, Praveen Jolly, Jyotirmoyee Sikdar, Krishna Poonia and Gopal Saini (members); AFI President, Secretary, Chief Coach and Chairman- Planning Committee will be Ex-Officio members of the committees.

ULTRA RUNNING

INDIAN TEAM PARTICIPATES IN IAU 6-HOUR VIRTUAL GLOBAL SOLIDARITY RUN

International Association of Ultra Runners (IAU) organised the 6-Hour Virtual Global Solidarity Run over 20-21 March 2021. In a truly global event, 33 men and 31 women teams from 33 countries participated across different time zones.

The Indian team comprised eight men and four women. Alongside the IAU event, the Athletics Federation of India also held a 6-Hour AFI Solidarity Run. Including both these events, a total of 24 of best Indian Ultrarunners from Dheradun, Bulandshahr, Jaipur, Noida, Bahadurgarh, Ghaziabad, Agra, Thane, Hyderabad and Bengaluru as well as California and Brussels, participated.

The AFI run was dedicated to the memory of Indian Ultrarunner Late LL Meena, who set out on an eternal run on 10 February 2021. Both the teams ran a total of 1280 Km over 6 hours; with the IAU team completing 760 km and the AFI team 520 km.

QUIZ CORNER

1. Who won the men and women's 100m finals in the National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships in Patiala?
2. What was the distance that M Sreeshankar (Kerala) leapt to improve his own men's Long Jump National Record in the National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships on March 16?
3. Name the runners who won the men and women's races in the Ageas Federal Life Insurance New Delhi Marathon on March 7?
4. Which athlete has the credit of being the first from independent India to finish an Olympic marathon?
5. Who broke Krishna Poonia's National Record in women's Discus Throw in the National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships in Patiala on March 19?
6. Why was 2016 Olympic Games Hammer Throw champion Dilshod Nazarov (Tajikistan) in the news recently?
7. Which Indian athlete improved his own National Record by 1cm in the Indian Grand Prix III in Patiala on March 5?
8. What is the name of the World Athletics project aimed at reaching out to the entire Athletics community seeking insights and feedback to shape the direction of the sport for the next decade?
9. What is order in which competitors can attempt practice throws at the competition area before the beginning of the event?
10. Who were named as Chairpersons of the Selection Committees for Seniors and Juniors respectively?

Note: All National Records set in Indian Grand Prix meets and the National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships are subject to ratification.

*Send your replies to communications@indianathletics.in by 15th April 2021. Winners with all correct answers will receive an Exclusive AFI T-shirt

*Winners of February 2021 Quiz - No winners.

