

NEWSLETTER



CONTINENTAL TOUR

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Continental Tour: First step towards Diamond League in Odisha



Thousands of young enthusiastic fans filled Bhubaneswar's Kalinga Stadium much before the start of the inaugural edition of the World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze level meet on August 10. The one-day prize money competition was jointly organised by the Government of Odisha and Athletics Federation of India (AFI).

Connecting fans through the World Athletics Series is a good way to make track and field popular in the region," said Bahadur Singh Sagoo, president AFI. "Continental Tour was the first step towards Diamond League competition in Odisha in the future."

He said after the successful conduct of the Bronze event and the next goal is to organise Continental Tour Silver level event and then Gold level. "We will move one step at a time. Eventually the aim is to conduct a highly competitive Diamond League in India," reveals the AFI president. "We will also bid for World Athletics Championships in future."

Since Continental Tour in Bhubaneswar was a qualifying event for the September 13 to 21



Tokyo World Athletics Championships in Japan, it turned out to be a good platform for athletes from 17 nations, including Great Britain, to showcase their potential and earn valuable global ranking points.

Odisha's Commissioner-cum-secretary of the Sports Department, Sachin Jadhav, said Odisha has excellent facilities to host world class track and field competitions. "Bhubaneswar has an Indoor track facility. There is an equally good hospitality sector," Jadhav adds. "In the near future Odisha could be a destination for a continental indoor meet."

In 2017, the Government of Odisha in coordination with AFI organised the Asian Athletics Championships at the same venue. It was the first major track and field competition on Odisha's soil.

During the Continental Tour, javelin thrower Rumesh Tharanga earned automatic qualification mark in the men's javelin. The Sri Lankan thrower hurled the spear to a distance of 86.50m, which was better than the World Athletics qualification mark of 85.50m. On his way to first spot,

Tharanga also improved his national record.

India's Asian Games champion in women's javelin throw, Annu Rani, grabbed the opportunity with both hands to stay in the 60m-plus zone. Annu's winning throw was 62.01m.

Long jumper Murali Sreeshankar and triple jumper Abdulla Aboobacker were among other leading Indian athletes who mesmerised the local fans at the one-day track and field competition. Both Sreeshankar and Aboobacker are in contention to qualify for Worlds through world ranking quota.

Asian and Commonwealth Games medallist, Sreeshankar, returning to competition after a long hiatus due to a post-surgery rehabilitation, impressed all. The International jumper from Kerala recorded a mark of 8.13m to win first position. It was also his season best effort.

As per World Athletics guidelines, athletes can qualify for the Worlds in September either by achieving entry standards or through global rankings.

India's versatile distance runner **Gulveer Singh** on song, improves national 3,000m outdoor track record



Singh improved national 5,000m record (Indoor and outdoor) to 12:59.77 seconds

India's 27 years old Asian Games bronze medallist in men's 10,000m is on song this season. The versatile army distance runner on August 12 improved national 3,000m outdoor record at Hungary's Gyulai Istvan Memorial Continental Tour clocking 7:34.49 seconds. He finished fifth in a highly competitive field. The army runner indoor 3,000m national record was 7:38.26 seconds.

The competition in Hungary was Singh's first race this season in Europe ahead of the September 13 to 21 Tokyo World Athletics Championships in Japan.

The multiple national record holder, ranging from 3,000m track to 25km road, the army runner will compete in men's 5,000m track in Tokyo.

Earlier in February, Singh improved national 5,000m record (Indoor and outdoor) to 12:59.77 seconds, which

was better than the automatic qualification time of 13:01.00 for the Tokyo World Athletics Championships.

The army's 27 years old distance runner started his 2025 season on a promising note. After breaking the 13 minutes barrier for the 5,000m track race, he went on to set a national record in the men's 10,000m event in March at The Ten Track Festival in San Juan Capistrano, California.

The Indian distance runner clocked 27:00.22 to finish sixth in the pro men's 10,000m race in California to improve his own national record of 27:14.88 set five months back in Japan.

After his 3000m record breaking performance in Hungary, the Indian runner flew back to his training base in Colorado Springs, USA. His next stop is the World Championships in Japan.

India's Asian Games champion **Annu Rani** exudes confidence ahead of Worlds in September



India's Asian Games champion in women's javelin thrower, Annu Rani, exuded confidence ahead of the World Athletics Championships in September. "I'm excited to have crossed 62m twice within a week in two different competitions across the globe," the 32 years old javelin thrower said.

The experienced javelin thrower from Uttar Pradesh says her 60m-plus throw on August 6 in Europe gave a big boost to her confidence. "I believe my preparation for the September 13 to 21 Tokyo World Athletics Championships in Japan was on track," Annu added.

According to Annu her performance of 62.59m during Continental Tour in Poland was a big step in the right direction. "I'm happy that I continued to perform well at the Bhubaneswar's Continental Tour on August 10 in Odisha. I would like to stay in that zone as global competition is around the corner," she said.

With a throw of 62.01m, Annu emerged winner in the javelin throw at the one-day

Continental Tour in Odisha. After a moderate start, the 32 years old Asian Games champion picked up steam in her fourth attempt, which turned out to be a winning throw. Annu said, back-to-back plus 62m throws in two Continental Tours—one in India and other in Poland was a good sign. "A steady performance gives me immense satisfaction that my preparation is gone in the right direction," Annu added.

Good performance of 62m in two Continental Tours has improved Annu's global ranking.

Of the 36 throwers eligible to compete in the women's javelin throw at Worlds in September, 11 athletes have achieved automatic qualification of 64m. The remaining 25 athletes will earn a ticket to Tokyo through the world ranking quota system.

August 24, 2025 is the deadline for athletes to achieve automatic qualification time or mark in their respective events for the World Athletics Championships in Japan.

We will prepare a roadmap to conduct one-time gene test at domestic level, says AFI medical panel

As per the new World Athletics (WA) rule, female athletes competing at next month's World Championships in Japan will have to undergo a mandatory one-time SRY (Sex-determining Region Y) gene test. Without a valid report of a gene test, female athletes will not be eligible to compete at global events sanctioned by the world body in track and field, says a member of the AFI medical panel.

The WA testing protocol will be overseen by the respective member federation at the regional level. One-time gene test, which can be conducted either through cheek swab or blood test, determines that only biological females compete in the women's category.

"The gene test mandatory for female athletes competing in next month's World Athletics Championships in Japan will eventually trickle down to the domestic level. All member federations will have to make adequate arrangements to conduct the test," said a member of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) medical panel.

The AFI medical panel's future roadmap will feature five key points, including the cost of testing. Given the diverse geographical conditions in the country, it will be challenging for the AFI medical

panel to ensure that testing is conducted in a transparent manner.

"Impersonation is the biggest issue," the AFI official adds. "Since there is a huge number of participants at the junior level, the future roadmap to conduct gene tests at domestic level has to be thoroughly prepared."

The majority Indian athletes coming from rural background have no access to advanced labs as gene tests could only be done in major metro cities in India.

"Each test might cost Rs 5000 to Rs 7000. The AFI medical panel will take a call on the expenditure for a huge number of tests at the domestic level. It takes five to seven working days for the lab to give its report. Gene testing is a highly specialised field and we can't rely on local lab reports," says the member of the AFI medical panel.

Exciting contest on cards at National Inter-State meet in Chennai, says Adille Sumariwalla

The 64th National Inter State Senior Athletics Championships in Chennai from August 20 to 24 will be the last chance for aspiring athletes aiming to win tickets to Tokyo World Athletics Championships in Japan, says Adille Sumariwalla, vice-president of World Athletics.



“The National Inter-State Athletics Championships will be the last domestic competition to achieve qualification for global meet in Japan,” Sumariwalla adds. “The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) will have a selection committee on August 23 and 24 in Chennai.”

Sumariwalla, a former president of AFI says August 24 is the deadline to qualify for the September 13 to 21 Worlds in Japan. As per guidelines of the global governing body in track and field, athletes can compete in Worlds in Tokyo either through automatic qualification or via world ranking quota system. Several Indians athletes have achieved automatic qualification marks in their respective events. Since each discipline has different world ranking quota allotments, we are confident more Indian athletes will showcase their potential at Inter-State Athletics Championships in Chennai and win tickets to Tokyo World Championships.

India’s two-time Olympic Games medallist, Neeraj Chopra is the defending

champion in the men’s javelin throw. Being winner of javelin title at 2023 Budapest World Athletics Championships in Hungary, Chopra has got wild card entry. “He (Chopra) is currently training in Europe and will reach Japan in the first week of September,” says Sumariwalla. Sachin Yadav and Yashvir Singh are two other javelin throwers who have a bright chance to win world ranking quota places for the prestigious global competition, adds Sumariwalla.

Asian and Commonwealth Games long jumper Murali Sreeshankar coming back to competition after a long lay-off due to injury has a good chance to earn Tokyo automatic qualification mark of 8.27m in Chennai, says former AFI president. “He (Sreeshankar) was close to the World Athletics qualification mark at the just concluded Continental Tour in Bhubaneswar. His gold medal winning jump was 8.13m in Bhubaneswar on August 10,” the vice-president of World Athletics adds. “He is fit and should be able to achieve his goal in Chennai.”

FOURTH NATIONAL JAVELIN DAY



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