

Athletics Federation of India

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# NEWSLETTER



SPOTLIGHT ON  
**JAVELIN**  
THROWERS

# INDIA'S DEPTH OF JAVELIN TALENT HOLDS GREAT HOPES

**W**ith more than half-a-dozen male javelin throwers crossing the 80m mark, the 2026 domestic season is expected to be competitive as well as exciting.

Keeping in mind the challenging domestic and continental competitions, members of the core group of javelin throwers --- Sachin Yadav, Rohit Yadav and Shivam Lokahare--- have started intensive training under the watchful eyes of foreign javelin throw expert Sergey Makarov at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

Makarov, a two-time Olympic medallist, was appointed earlier in 2025 to strengthen the elite javelin throw programme in the country.

Uttar Pradesh's 26-year-old Asian silver medallist, Sachin Yadav, emerged the hottest property in Indian javelin in 2025. The promising thrower had an outstanding season, finishing a creditable fourth with 86.27m on his debut at the 2025 Tokyo World Athletics Championships. He will be one to watch in 2026.

India's biggest javelin name and two-time Olympic and world medallist, Neeraj Chopra, started his season with a bang, breaking the 90m barrier in May. However, he wasn't successful in defending his title in Tokyo in September. He eventually finished eighth in

Japan, struggling with back pain.

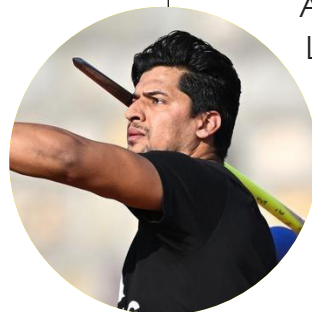
Based out of South Africa, the 2021 Olympic champion has also started preparation for the 2026 season. "He has started general fitness training," Radhakrishnan Nair, chief Athletics coach, said.

The 24-year-old thrower Rohit Yadav was impressive in 2025. He competed at the Worlds in Tokyo but couldn't advance to the final. His season's best of 83.65m was recorded at a domestic meet in Chennai in August. He will be hungry to stay on course to earn a berth in the national team for the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games next season.

Army's 21-year-old rising thrower Shivam Lokahare also joined the 80m club in the 2025 season. His personal best of 84.31m was set during Inter-Services Athletics Championships. "He has potential to further raise the bar," the chief athletics coach said.

Besides polishing technical skills, achieving good physical fitness is also one of the key features of the training programme.

Sachin Yadav is one of those throwers who plans to work on his physical fitness as well to achieve new goals in 2026. "Better physical fitness will certainly enable him (Sachin) to improve his overall performance and at the same time stay injury free," Nair said.



# AFI selects seven-member national team for World Cross Country Championships in USA

Asian champion, Gulveer Singh, will be among a seven-member national squad that will compete at the 2026 World Cross-Country Championship in the USA.

For the first time in nearly three decades the global Cross Country Championships under the aegis of World Athletics return to the USA. The competition will be held on January 10 in Tallahassee, Florida.

Asian champion over 5,000m and 10,000m track races at 2025 Gumi Asian Athletics Championships, Gulveer Singh will compete over 10 km course in Florida. Sawan Barwal and Abhishek Pal are other two athletes registered for the 10km course at the World Cross Country.

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) will also field a mixed relay team. Ajay Kumar Saroj, Yoonus Shah, Pooja and Ankita will be members of the mixed relay team (4x2km). Each male and female runner will run a 2km leg.

Tentative team: Gulveer Singh, Sawan Barwal and Abhishek Pal (10km). Ajay Kumar Saroj, Yoonus Shah, Ankita, Pooja (all mixed relay squad 4x2km).



# National Indoor and World Athletics Continental Tour Silver Level event in Bhubaneswar

**The inaugural edition of the National Indoor Championships and the World Athletics Continental Tour Silver Level Meet, an upgraded version of this year's Bronze Level meet, in Bhubaneswar will be the biggest attractions of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) 2026 domestic calendar, this was announced here on Tuesday.**

"The first National Indoor Championships will be held at Bhubaneswar's Indoor Stadium on March 24 and 25," AFI competition director Ravinder Chaudhry said. "The World Athletic Continental Tour Silver Level Meet will be held in August in Bhubaneswar." Besides, the inaugural edition of Indoor Open Combined Events and Pole Vault Competition will be held in Bhubaneswar in May. The comprehensive annual 2026 domestic calendar will feature as many as 40 competitions to sharpen competing skills of senior and junior athletes in the build up to the 2026 Asian Games (September 19 to October 4).

The AFI has also introduced an Indian Athletics Series from next calendar year to encourage competitors at regional level. The 16-part series will commence from April and continue till September. "The Indian Athletics Series will give a chance to young athletes on the fringes to compete at a higher level with minimum entry standard," AFI competition director said.

To be eligible to participate in the 29th National Senior Athletics Federation Championships in May, the AFI has made it mandatory for athletes to compete in a minimum of two competitions.

The competitors will have to participate in three competitions, including state meets, to be eligible to take part in the 65th National Inter State Senior Athletics Championships in July.

## THE 2026 AFI DOMESTIC CALENDAR

<b>January 24:</b>	60th National Cross Country Championships (Ranchi, Jharkhand) TBD: NIDJAM (20th National Inter District Junior Athletics Meet).
<b>February 21-22:</b>	13th Indian Open Race Walking Competition (Chandigarh)
<b>March 7-8:</b>	Fifth Indian Open Throws Competition (Patiala, Punjab)
<b>March 14-15:</b>	Fifth Indian Open Jumps Competition (Anju Bobby George Foundation, Bengaluru)
<b>March 24-25:</b>	First National Indoor Athletics Championships (Bhubaneswar, Odisha)
<b>March 28:</b>	Seventh Indian Open 400m meet (Trivandrum, Kerala)
<b>April 4:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 1 (Bengaluru, Karnataka)
<b>April 5:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 2 (Udaipur, Rajasthan)
<b>April 11:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 3 (Sangrur, Punjab).
<b>April 12:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 4 (Ranchi, harkhand)

<b>April 18:</b>	Third National Open Relay Competition (Chandigarh)
<b>April 24-26:</b>	24th National Junior Athletics Federation Competition (Mangalore, Karnataka)
<b>May 2-3:</b>	First Indian Indoor Open Combined Events and Pole Vault Competition (Bhubaneswar)
<b>May 9:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 5 (New Delhi)
<b>May 10:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 6 (Chennai, Tamil Nadu)
<b>May 22-25</b>	(29th National Senior Athletics Federation Competition (Ranchi, Jharkhand).

#### **MAY 26 TO JUNE 5: STATE COMPETITIONS**

<b>June 6:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 7 (Guwahati, Assam)
<b>June 7:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 8 (Pune, Maharashtra)
<b>June 13:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 9 (Ludhiana, Punjab)
<b>June 14:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 10 (Trivandrum, Kerala)
<b>June 20:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 11 (Kolkata, West Bengal)
<b>June 21:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 12 (Nadiad, Gujarat)

#### **JUNE 21 TO 30: STATE COMPETITIONS**

<b>July 8-12:</b>	65th National Inter State Senior Athletics Championships (Bhubaneswar, Odisha)
<b>August 7:</b>	Fifth National Javelin Day Competition (all districts)
<b>August 14:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 13 (Warangal, Telangana)
<b>August 16:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 14 (Panchkula, Haryana)
<b>August 22:</b>	Indian Open World Athletics Continental Tour Silver Level (Bhubaneswar, Odisha)
<b>August 29:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 15 (Shillong, Sikkim)

#### **AUGUST 16 TO 31: JUNIOR STATE COMPETITIONS**

<b>September 1-3</b>	(21st National Youth Athletics Championships (Ludhiana, Punjab).
<b>September 5:</b>	Indian Athletics Series 16 (Anju Bobby George Foundation, Bengaluru)
<b>September 12:</b>	Indian Athletics Series Final-by invitation (New Delhi)

#### **SEPTEMBER 14 TO 24: BOARD MEETS**

<b>September 14-16:</b>	North Zone Junior/South Zone Junior (Dehradun/Puducherry)
<b>September 22-24:</b>	East Zone Junior/West Central Zone Junior (Shillong/Patna/Goa/ Indore)
<b>October 8-11</b>	(65th National Open Athletics Championships (New Delhi)
<b>October 16-18:</b>	Sixth Indian U23 Athletics Competition (Jaipur, Rajasthan)
<b>October 23-27:</b>	41st National Junior Athletics Championships (Chennai, Tamil Nadu).

# Indian Athletics Series to give more opportunities to athletes on the fringes

The AFI (Athletics Federation of India) new concept—Indian Athletics Series—spanning six months from April to September—is expected to give more opportunities to athletes having potential at the regional level in the 2026 season. “The Indian Athletics Series is being held across the country from April to September. The 16-leg series will allow competitors to travel less to compete,” Ravinder Chaudhry, AFI competition director said.

The comprehensive annual 2026 domestic calendar will overall feature as many as 40 competitions, including 16-part Indian Athletics Series.

The AFI, according to Ravinder Chaudhry, conducted workshops to apprise coaches and officials about the packed 2026 national domestic competition calendar. Workshops were held in Trivandrum, Patiala and Bengaluru. “During the workshops the coaches/officials were advised to chalk out training plans to peak at the right time because some athletes in the 2025 season weren’t able to repeat their best performance in the main competition. Or at the



**INDIAN ATHLETICS**

## Indian Athletics Series

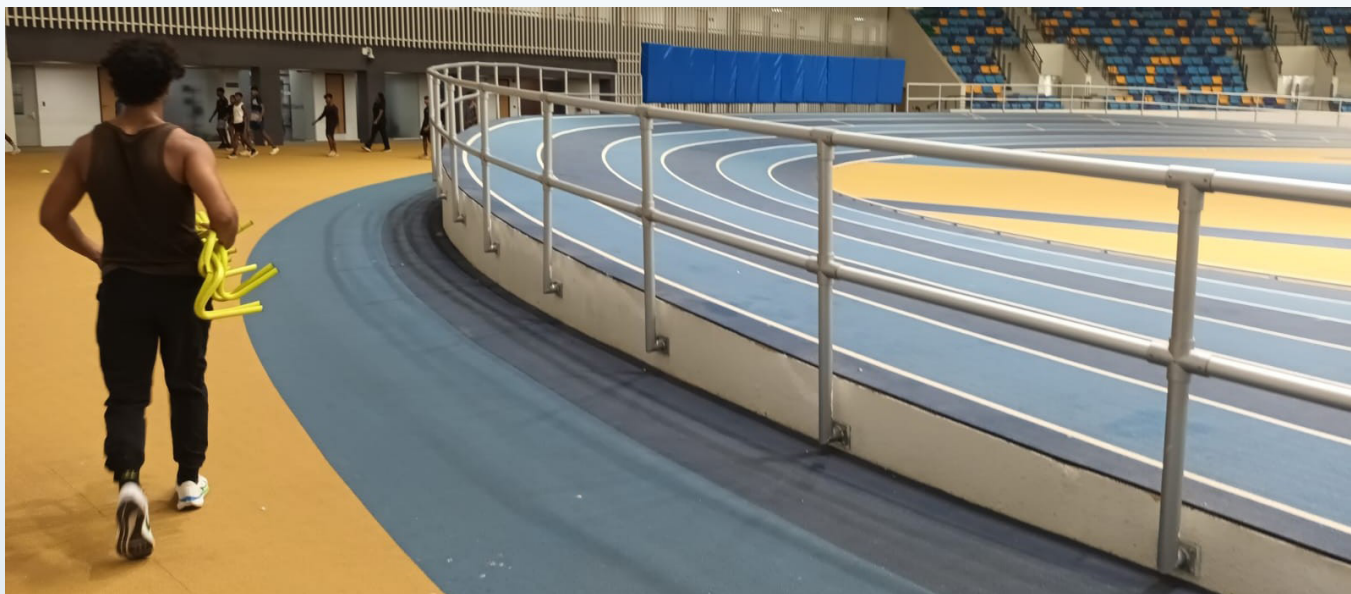
**16 Meets • 16 Venues**

Now for Seniors & Juniors both



international level,” the AFI competition director added. “This was the main goal to conduct workshops for the coaches/officials. The AFI will also set a minimum qualification standard for each of the 16-part Indian Athletics Series spread across the country to encourage more participation.”

# AFI plans to organise World Indoor Championships in 2028



**T**he Athletics Federation of India (AFI) has expressed interest to conduct two major global competitions—World Indoor and U20 World Athletics Championships—in 2028, says Bahadur Singh Sagoo president of AFI.

“World Indoor Championship and World U20 Athletics Championships if allotted to India in 2028 will give a major fillip to track and field in the country,” Sagoo added.

Earlier this year AFI had expressed interest to conduct two continental competitions—Asian Relay in 2027 and Asian Indoor Championships in 2028.

“International competitions on home soil will be a big opportunity for the young generation to watch elite global athletes in action,” Sagoo said.

The proposed venue for the 2027 Asian Relay Championships will be Chandigarh as the city has good facilities to conduct an international competition, says Sagoo. “The Asian Relay Championships will feature six events, including mixed 4x400m relay and 4x100m relay,” he said.

Kalinga’s Indoor Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha will be venue for the continental and world indoor competitions. “Odisha has good facilities to conduct indoor and outdoor competition,” the AFI president said.

Bhubaneswar was the venue for the 2017 Asian Athletics Championships. Earlier this year World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze Level competition was held at Bhubaneswar’s Kalinga Stadium.

# World Athletics Ultimate Championship a launch pad for Indian athletes: Adille Sumariwalla

**A** record-breaking \$10 million prize money (Rs 89.95 crores approximately) has been earmarked for the World Athletics Ultimate Championships scheduled to be held from September 11 to 13, 2026 in Budapest, says Adille Sumariwalla.

It will be a good opportunity for Indian athletes to test themselves against the best in the business. Sumariwalla, one of the vice-presidents of World Athletics, said the Ultimate Championships spread over three days will act as a launching pad for the 2028 Olympic Games.

“The Ultimate Championship is not a World Athletics series. Invitation to compete will be limited as there is no entry or qualification system,” Sumariwalla added. “Invitation will also be based on World ranking during September 2, 2025 to September 1, 2026.” Olympic champion from Paris 2024, the 2025 Tokyo World champion and winner of the 2026 Diamond League final in Brussels will be eligible to compete at the Ultimate Championship.

The programme will feature women's and men's competitions in 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 5000m, 110m hurdles/100m hurdles, 400m hurdles, pole vault, high jump, long jump and javelin throw. Women's triple jump and men's hammer throw will also be part of the programme. Mixed 4x100m and 4x400m relays have also been added.

## REGISTRATION OF COACHES

It's mandatory for all athletics experts, including district level coaches to register with AFI (Athletics Federation of India) before the deadline of January 30, 2026. “Coaches who don't register with AFI will not be allowed to accompany respective state or district teams during AFI competitions,” Bahadur Singh Sagoo, AFI president said

## First World Athletics Level 3 Advance Course in Patiala

The inaugural edition of World Athletics Level 3 Advance Course in combined events, jumps and middle and long distance successfully concluded at Patiala's National Institute of Sports in Punjab. The four-day course attracted 33 candidates and concluded on December 7, 2025.

Gunter Lange, a German based in Uganda, was the main lecturer for the middle and long distance course. India's foreign race walking expert, Ronald Weigel from Germany, was assistant lecturer (middle and long distance course).

Herbert Czingon (jumps and combined events) and Dallet Krishnan (assistant lecturer in combined events) were other experts who conducted the World Athletics Level 3 Course in Patiala.

Nine candidates attended the combined events course. Twelve candidates each were present for jumps, and middle and long distance courses.

World Athletics Advance Level 3 Course in throws will be conducted at SAI (Sports Authority of India) Complex in Bengaluru in third week of this month. Donal Babbitt of USA will be the main lecturer during the four-day course in Bengaluru. Only 12 candidates are eligible to sign up for the course.

# Overwhelming response to inaugural edition of **ASMITA League**



**A**SMITA League conducted in U14 and U16 girls' categories across 300 districts in 26 states was a big draw. The inaugural edition of ASMITA League conducted by Athletics Federation of India (AFI) in coordination with Sports Authority of India (SAI) from November 10 to 30 in 26 states, says Bahadur Singh Sagoo, president AFI, attracted a large number of school going students. "There was a good response to grassroots competition in athletics. There were four disciplines in the U14 girls' group, including Kids Javelin and triathlon. Seven disciplines, including 60m and 600m track races featured in the U16 competition," the AFI president added. Each district was also allotted Rs 75,000 by the government (SAI) for the smooth conduct of the ASIMITA League. The medal winners were also given certificates.

The main goal, according to the AFI president, was to encourage girls to take part in sports activities at the grassroots level. "The ASMITA League turned out to be a good platform for budding athletes to showcase their potential," Sagoo said.

The AFI president said talent identification teams also scouted athletes having potential to excel at future international events. "Selected athletes will be enrolled at SAI-run NCOE (National Centre of Excellence) across the country," Sagoo said.

**ASMITA LEAGUE**

