

Athletics Federation of India

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NEWSLETTER



NEERAJ CHOPRA CLASSIC

Performance graph spiralled, training centres blossomed post decentralisation



A paradigm shift is apparent in coaching across various centres in the country after decentralisation of the national coaching camps following the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, Lalit Bhanot, former AFI (Athletics Federation of India) secretary, said.

The AFI conducted a one-day deliberation with all stakeholders recently in New Delhi to further strengthen the decentralisation training module.

After due diligence, according to the former AFI secretary, it was decided to decentralise the national coaching camps in preparation for international meets following the Paris Games.

“Post 2024 Paris Olympic Games the goal was to have more training pockets across the country and increase the strength at the grassroots level,” Bhanot added. “Due to decentralisation there were also apprehensions of doping and athletes peaking at the wrong time. But AFI successfully managed to tackle the two burgeoning issues.”



Since there are no national camps due to decentralisation, the athletes have started practicing at different centres managed by government departments and private sectors. The facilities, including coaching staff at those centres, too have improved, which augurs well for the future of Indian athletics, he said.

Nearly 11 months after decentralisation of the national coaching camps, the overall results were encouraging at the Asian Athletics Championships held in Gumi, South Korea from May 27 to 31. The national team finished second with 24 medals, eight of them gold, only behind China in medal tally.

Bhanot explained: "The performance graph of athletes at domestic and international meets in the first half of this season suggests that the AFI decentralisation training model has been productive."

Before decentralisation, Bhanot said, the national coaching camps in preparation for international competitions could only accommodate around 150 athletes. The number of athletes training at different centres across the country has increased tenfold in the last 11 months, he added.

"The AFI now has to monitor training of more than 1,000 athletes at different centres across the country. The decentralisation

module has been successful because more athletes are able to get exposure at domestic and international level," the former AFI secretary said. Government run centres in Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha also have good facilities.

The Reliance Academy in Mumbai is home to top sprinters. "The mandate to oversee training of men's 4x100m relay has been entrusted to Reliance Academy," Bhanot said. "The results are good. The top sprinters improved the national men's 4x100m relay record to 38.69 seconds. The individual men's 100m and 200m national records have also been bettered twice in the last four months. The men's 800m national record has been lowered to 1:44.93 seconds."

The AFI has conceptualised a robust monitoring system to enhance performance of the Indian track and field contingent at the 2026 Asian and Commonwealth Games.

The 2026 Commonwealth Games will be held from July 23 to August 2 in Glasgow. The Asian Games will be held after that, from September 19 to October 4 in Japan.

"All the stakeholders including departments and private entities should work in tandem for holistic development of track and field in the country," the AFI former secretary added.

Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025: Was good platform to showcase India's depth in javelin throw



**August
24, 2025 is the
deadline to qualify for
the Tokyo World Athletics
Championships.**

The Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025 featuring 12 competitors from across the globe proved productive for Indian javelin throwers ahead of the September 13 to 21 Tokyo World Athletics Championships in Japan, Radhakrishnan Nair, chief athletics coach said. The competition sanctioned by the World Athletics was held on July 5 at Bengaluru.

While two-time Olympic and world medallist Neeraj Chopra won the title with a throw of 86.18m, Sachin Yadav collected valuable world ranking points with a creditable fourth place finish. His best throw was 82.33m.

Kenya's 2016 Olympic silver medallist, Julius Yego, was second with a throw of 84.15m. Sri Lanka's rising javelin thrower Rumesh Pathirage finished third with a distance of 84.34m.

"Neeraj Chopra Classic was a good opportunity for leading Indian javelin throwers to evaluate their performance on the home ground," the chief coach added.

Of the 12 javelin throwers from across the globe at Neeraj Chopra Classic, five were Indian throwers including India's two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra. Sahil Silwal, Rohit Yadav and Yashvir Singh were leading Indian athletes in the race for the podium.

Sachin Yadav and Yashvir Singh currently have qualified for the Tokyo World Athletics Championships through a global ranking system.

Sachin Yadav's ranking is as high as 23 in the road to Tokyo World Athletics Championships. Yashvir Singh's global ranking position is 33 and his personal and season best of 82.57m was achieved at the Gumi Asian Athletics Championships in May.

Top 36 athletes will be eligible to compete in men's javelin as per World Athletics rules at Worlds in Tokyo. The competitors can qualify through an entry standard of 85.50m or world ranking points.

Sprinter Animesh Kujur on track to compete at Worlds in September

India's talented sprinter Animesh Kujur is on track to compete in the September 13 to 21 Tokyo World Athletics in Japan.

The automatic entry standard in men's 200m is 20.16 seconds, but the 22 years old Indian sprinter has good world ranking points to stay on track to qualify through the global ranking system.

The promising sprinter made good progress in the first half of the season. Kujur holds both men's 100m and 200m national records. His personal and season best in 100m is 10.18 seconds, a national record.

The 2025 Asian Championships bronze medallist has also improved the national 200m record twice in this season. His personal and season best is 20.32 seconds,

At the just concluded one-day prestigious Monaco Diamond league he competed in the U23 200m event

to finish fourth with a time of 20.55 seconds.

In April this year, Kujur was a member of the 4x100 relay team that improved more than a decade old record to 38.69 seconds during a domestic meet in Chandigarh. While at a domestic track and field competition in Kochi, he lowered the national 200m record to 20.40 seconds.

In May on his way to winning bronze at the Gumi Asian Athletics Meet he improved his own 200m mark to 20.32 seconds.

In July he etched his name in record books by improving national 100m record to 10.18 seconds. The previous record was 10.20 seconds set by Gurindervir Singh in March.



Mohammed Afsal breaks 1:45 seconds barrier for 800m



Earlier this month during an international event in the Polish city of Poznan, India's Mohammed Afsal became the first Indian athlete to break the 1:45 barrier for the 800m. On July 5, the Kerala's 29 years old middle distance runner clocked 1:44.93 seconds to finish sixth in the World Athletics sanctioned event in Poland.

Afsal has twice lowered the national 800m record this season. At the UAE Athletics Grand Prix held in Dubai in May, Afsal finished second with a time of 1:45.61 seconds to better the previous national record of 1:45.65 seconds clocked by Jinson Johnson in 2018 in Guwahati, Assam. Johnson had erased the long-standing national 800m record of Sriram Singh during a domestic meet in Assam.

Odisha is ready to host global track and field events in future, says state sports minister Suryabanshi Suraj

Odisha has world class facilities to host international track and field competitions, says state sports minister Suryabanshi Suraj. "We have good infrastructure and it should be put to use. And, the best way would be to conduct global track and field competition in future," the Odisha state sports minister added.

This year Odisha will play host for the first time to World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze Level meet on August 10 at Kalinga Sports Complex.

Odisha has indoor track within the premises of iconic Kalinga Sports Complex in Bhubaneswar. In 2017 Asian Athletics Championships was also conducted at Kalinga Sports Complex.

The World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze Level has valuable world ranking points and will also act as qualifying event for the September 13 to 21 Tokyo World Athletics Championships in Japan.

Athletes from more than 10 countries apart from host India will compete in one-day competition. To mark the 30 days countdown for

continental tour, the state government said, it is a matter of great pride for Odisha to host a global athletics event like World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze Level.

"We will continue to host continental tour event in future," Suryabanshi Suraj added.

Countries that are expected to compete includes Turkmenistan, Bhutan, Philippines, South Korea, Malaysia, Iraq, Vietnam, Republic of Cameroon, Sri Lanka, Iran and the Maldives. A total of 20 events, including 10 in the women's group will be held during the continental event tournament.

"We are taking all necessary steps to ensure smooth conduct of the continental tour," the state sports minister added.

Events: Men: 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 5000m, long jump, triple jump. Javelin throw and 4x400m relay.

Women: 100m, 200m, 400m, 1500m, 100m hurdles, long jump, javelin throw and 4x400m relay. Mixed 4x400m relay.

Overwhelming response to distance track races in U20 national athletics meet



More than 40 athletes competed in the men's 3000m track race at the three-day 23rd National Junior (U20) Federation Athletics Championships held between June 22 to 24 Prayagraj's Madan Mohan Malaviya Sports Complex in Uttar Pradesh, indicating depth in distance running events at the grassroots level field.

With top eight male runners in the 3000m race improving the previous meet record of 8:26.72 set by Ajay in 2021 in Sangrur, Punjab, was the high point of the race.

The honour went to Vinod Singh of Madhya Pradesh who surged ahead of his rivals to win gold with a time of 8:14.22 seconds.

Vivek Chand of Gujarat finished second with a time of 8:14.81 and Rahul Kumar of Chhattisgarh crossed the line at 8:15.25 to finish third.

The competitors in the 3000m track race were divided into two groups—Race A and B. The medal winners were decided on the basis of the performance in both races.

The men's 5,000m track race attracted 50 entries. Top six runners crossed the finish line below 14 minutes and 30 seconds. The winner Rahul Kumar Verma of Chhattisgarh clocked 14:20.11.

Going by the results during the U20 national meet, it hints of huge depth in the field. The AFI (Athletics Federation of India) has also set up a panel under the chairmanship of Sagarpreet Hooda to conduct a survey and scout athletes having potential in middle and long distance events.

As many as 959 athletes, including 278 female competitors were seen in action during the three-day U20 national meet in Uttar Pradesh.

Gulveer Singh has potential to run 1500m below 3:35 seconds, says chief national athletics coach



India's Hangzhou Asian Games bronze medallist in men's 10,000m, Gulveer Singh, has shown potential to excel in shorter track races particularly 1500m, Radhakrishnan Nair, chief athletics coach said.

In preparation for the Tokyo World Athletics Championships in September in Japan, the 27 years old army's long-distance runner raced over 1500m at World Athletics Continental Tour on July 12 in the USA. He finished fourth with a time of 3:36.58 seconds. The men's national 1500m record of 3:35.24 stands in the name of Jinson Johnson.

It was Gulveer's first attempt over the 1500m and the chief athletics coach believes the army's international long-distance runner can further improve his time over the 1500m.

"He (Gulveer) has potential to do better in the 1500m race in future," the chief athletics coach added.

In February this year, Gulveer bettered the World Athletics Championships automatic qualification time of 13:01.00 for men's 5,000m by clocking 12:59.43 seconds.

Army's versatile runner has made steady improvement this year in longer track races. He holds the national record for 3000m (7:38.26 seconds), 5000m (12:59.77 seconds) and 10,000m (27:00.22 seconds). All three records were set early in the season this year.

At the Gumi Asian Athletics Championships held in South Korea in May, Gulveer dominated both 5,000m and 10,000m track races.



Bhubaneswar to host World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze Level meet on August 10.



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