



Athletics
Federation
of India

NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2024

www.indianathletics.in

NEWSLETTER



BACK TO ROOTS

Inside
Story

pg. 04 | Focus on improving global ranking before June 30 deadline

pg. 07 | Aspiring Indian athletes on track for Paris Olympic Games

HEALTHY DOMESTIC COMPETITION WILL BOOST INDIAN JAVELIN EVEN MORE: **NEERAJ CHOPRA**



Radhakrishnan Nair, chief athletics coach addressing media on the eve of domestic meet in Bhubaneswar.

“Healthy competition during domestic meets will certainly be a big advantage to Indian javelin throwers in future,” Olympic and world champion Neeraj Chopra said after winning gold at the 27th national federation senior athletics competition held from May 12 to 15.

The 26-year-old star was competing in a domestic competition for the first time after winning gold at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, held in 2021. His gold-winning throw was 87.58m, giving India's first athletics Olympic medal in some style.

Bhubaneswar was Chopra's second competition of the 2024 season. He started his quest for the Paris Games with the Doha Diamond League where he won second spot with a throw of 88.36m, finishing behind Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic (88.38m).

“I didn't push hard in Bhubaneswar as I was leading the field,” he said in the post-match interaction.

The world champion was of the view that intense domestic competition will give an edge to the Indian throwers when they compete at international level. “If four to five throwers are able to record more than 80m in domestic competitions, it will act as good preparation for international events,” the world champion added.

At the 2023 Budapest World Athletics Championships, the men's javelin throw final saw three Indian athletes in top six. While Neeraj Chopra went on to win gold, Kishore Kumar Jena and DP Manu finished fifth and sixth respectively.

Both Neeraj Chopra and Kishore Kumar Jena have achieved Paris Olympic Games automatic qualification mark of 85.50m.

According to Neeraj Chopra, he had expected good competition in Bhubaneswar. "I was expecting Manu to cross 85m," he said. "He (Manu) had a slight edge over the other competitors in the beginning but as the competition progressed, he wasn't able to go past 82.06m and settled for silver."

Neeraj Chopra's opening throw in Bhubaneswar was 82.00m. His second attempt was no mark. His third attempt was 81.29m and the fourth attempt was 82.27m. He skipped his last two attempts.

On the other hand, Manu hurled the spear to 82.06m in his first attempt. His aim was to achieve the Paris Olympic Games automatic qualification mark of 85.50m in Bhubaneswar. But he could not improve on 82.06m on the hot and humid day and settled for second spot.

Maharashtra's Uttam Balasaheb Patil was third

with a throw of 78.39m. Fourth place went to Bibi Antony of Madhya Pradesh (77.37m). Home favourite and Olympic Games probable, Kishore Jena, finished fifth (75.49m). Olympian Shivpal Singh finished 10th (71.01m)

The four-day 27th national federation senior athletics competition was also a good platform for aspiring athletes aiming to crack Paris Olympic Games qualification.

"Competition in Bhubaneswar was a good warm-up event to iron out grey areas ahead of the Paris Games for the Olympic probables," Radhakrishnan Nair, chief athletics coach, said.

Maharashtra's Abha Khatua broke the national women's shot put record in Bhubaneswar. She hurled the iron ball to 18.41m to stay on course to improve her global ranking. Her current Road to Paris global ranking was 35 on June 6. She has 1113 points in her kitty. The automatic qualification for Paris Olympic Games in women's shot put is 18.80m. Members of the national 4x400m relay team, including Amoj Jacob, also tested their speed endurance in 400m.

Asian Games champion in shot put, Tajinderpal Singh Toor, and long jumper Jeswin Aldrin were the other major participants in Bhubaneswar.



Olympic and world champion Neeraj Chopra in action in Bhubaneswar.

“Competition in Bhubaneswar was a good warm-up event to iron out grey areas ahead of the Paris Games for the Olympic probables,”
Radhakrishnan Nair, chief athletics coach, said.

Focus on improving global ranking before June 30 deadline



Indian mixed relay team won gold at Asian Relay in Bangkok.

It was so near yet so far for the national mixed 4x400m relay team at the inaugural edition of Asian Relay on May 20 in Bangkok.

The team of Muhammad Ajmal, Jyothika Sri Dandi, Amoj Jacob and S Subha dug deep into their reserves to post a time of 3:14.12 seconds and win the gold medal.

But they narrowly fell short of achieving qualification for the Paris Olympic Games. The men's and women's 4x400m relay teams won silver.

The goal for the mixed 4x400m relay team was to better 3:13:56 seconds set by the Italian mixed relay team to earn the 16th place in world ranking.

As per the rules of World Athletics, top 16 relay teams will be eligible to compete at the Paris Olympic Games. June 30 is the deadline to qualify for the Games.

Amoj Jacob, one of the key runners of the national team, was confident of making the cut for the Olympics in the mixed 4x400m relay event before the deadline of June 30. "We will be competing in an international relay event in June. The team has a good chance to break the 3:14 barrier in the coming days" Jacob said. "We will certainly improve our global ranking to rise above the 16th position and win a ticket to Paris."

The men's 4x400m and women's 4x400m relay teams have already qualified for Paris, from the World Relay in Bahamas on May 4 and 5.

The mixed 4x400m relay team members weren't successful in achieving Paris qualification in Bahamas. The athletes were better prepared at the Asian Relay in Bangkok, but narrowly missed out. "The athletes were very close to the target time in Bangkok. They are well prepared and have another chance before the June 30 deadline," Radhakrishnan Nair, chief athletics coach, said.

Impressive show by Indian race walkers in Slovakia

Olympic hopeful and national record holder, Akshdeep Singh, finished third in the men's 20km race walk event at the World Athletics sanctioned Race Walking tour in Slovakia on May 25. He was the best among the Indian athletes in fray.

Slovakia was another chance for a core group of Indian race walkers preparing for the Paris Olympic Games starting on July 26 to test their endurance.

Akshdeep Singh clocked 1:20:52 for a third place finish in the European competition. Suraj Panwar was overall sixth (1:21:52) and the second best Indian in the field.

The third Indian was Paramjeet Singh Bisht, who was overall seventh (1:22:10).

Of the four male race walkers who were successful in achieving the Paris Olympic Games automatic qualification standard of 1:20:10 during the qualification window -- it started on December 31, 2022 -- three athletes will be eligible to compete at the Olympic Games. The qualification window concludes June 30, 2024.

The other Indian race walkers in Slovakia were S Servin (ninth---1:22:20), Vikash Singh (15th--1:24:10), Arshpreet Singh (16th --1:24:23).

The past two competitive seasons were quite productive for elite race walkers as they got regular international exposure to polish their skills.



Indian race walkers pose for a picture after good show in Slovakia.

In preparation for the Paris Olympic Games, the core group of race walkers went to South Africa for a month-long exposure tour in March.

The national team also competed at the 2024 World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships held in Antalya, Turkey on April 20 and 21.

Akshdeep and Priyanka Goswami were successful in qualifying for the inaugural marathon race walking mixed relay event to be introduced at the Paris Olympic Games, in Antalya.

A maximum of 25 teams will compete in the newly introduced marathon race walking mixed relay event at Paris. In 2023 Priyanka Goswami qualified in the individual women's 20km race walk event for the 2024 Olympics.

A maximum of 25 teams will compete in the newly introduced marathon race walking mixed relay event at Paris.

Young female middle and long distance runners are reaping benefits of IOCL camp

Promising female middle and long distance runners shortlisted for the IOCL camp this year in January have started benefiting by improving overall performance.

Over a dozen athletes in the camp have access to modern facilities, including a scientific backup system to polish skills. The camp is being conducted at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) complex in Bengaluru.

Prachi Ankush Devkar, one of the talented middle distance runners spotted for the IOCL camp, is gearing up for July 31 to August 5 World U20 Athletics Championships scheduled to be held in Lima, Peru.

At the Junior Federation Cup athletics meet held from March 8 to 10 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, Prachi Ankush Devkar won 3,000m silver with a time of 9:53.76 seconds.

A month later at the Asian U20 meet in Dubai (April 24 to 27), she improved her time to 9:44.28 seconds. She finished fourth.

The qualifying time for World U20 for women's 3,000m is 9:32.00. "She (Prachi) will compete in the upcoming senior domestic circuit to achieve World U20 qualification," Anupama Srivastava, athletics coach at the IOCL said.

The first phase of the IOCL camp that started in January was for 42 days, the athletics coach said. "Later the camp was extended to give more exposure to the athletes," the female athletics coach added. "The main goal is to prepare young female middle and long distance runners for the 2024 and 2028 Olympic Games."



Talented junior female runners competing in 3000m event at Asian U20 Athletics meet in Dubai.

Athletes inducted into IOCL camp are also knocking the doors of the national team ahead of the Paris Olympic Games. Two athletes who have potential to qualify for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games are getting international exposure to improve their performance. Seema and Ankita— shortlisted for the IOCL camp are currently training in Colorado Springs, USA.

"Both Seema and Ankita are benefiting from International exposure," the athletics coach explained.

The athletes from IOCL camp also made a good impression at the 27th national federation senior athletics championships held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha in May. Akshana won gold in 1500m with a time of 4:23.65 seconds, while Nikita Sharma claimed silver with a time of 4:25.05.

Aspiring Indian athletes on track for Paris Olympic Games

Several Indian athletes were successful in achieving the Paris Olympic Games automatic qualification standard in their respective events till May this year. The athletes can compete at the Paris Olympic Games either through direct qualification via global ranking system before the June 30 deadline. "We expect more athletes to qualify through the global ranking system," Radhakrishnan Nair, chief athletics coach, said.

India's 26 year-old Olympic and world champion, Neeraj Chopra, will be among prominent athletes in the national team for the Paris Olympic Games starting July 26. The track and field competition will start August 1.

Chopra has a personal best of 89.94m. While he recorded 88.36m at Doha Diamond League in May.

Asian Games silver medalist, Kishore Kumar Jena is the second Indian javelin thrower, who was successful in earning an automatic qualification mark of 85.50m within the qualification window. The Odisha's 28 years old international thrower has a personal best of 87.54m.

Commonwealth and Asian Games medalist, Avinash Sable, has also earned a ticket to the Paris Olympic Games. The 29 years old army runner has a personal best of 8:11.20 seconds and will compete in the men's 3000m steeplechase in Paris.

Asian Games medalist, Parul Chaudhary, has qualified in the women's 3000m steeplechase and has a personal best of 9:15.31 seconds.

The Indian athletes were also successful in road racing as four race walkers have breached the automatic qualification time of 1:20:10 during the



Relay team has qualified for Paris Olympic Games qualification period.

Akshdeep Singh, Paramjeet Singh Bisht, Ram Baboo and Vikash Singh are the four main contenders in the men's 20km race walk. However, as per eligibility rules of the World Athletics, three athletes will be allowed to represent the country in each discipline at the Paris Olympic Games.

The 28 -year-old Commonwealth Games medalist, Priyanka Goswami, has made the cut for the Paris Olympic Games in the women's 20km race walking event. She has a personal best of 1:28:45.

The national men and women's 4x400m relay teams have also qualified for the Paris Olympic Games during the World Relays in Bahamas on May 5.

Avinash Sable gears up for Paris with 2nd place in Portland, **DP Manu claims 1st position at Taiwan Open**

While Commonwealth and Asian Games medallist in men's 3,000m steeplechase, Avinash Sable, began his 2024 season with a second place finish at the Portland's Track Festival on June 9, promising javelin thrower DP Manu has been inching towards his goal of making cut for the men's javelin to compete at the Paris Olympic Games.

Sable clocked 8:21.85 in his first steeplechase race of this season in Portland. Parul Chaudhary finished third in the women's 3000m steeplechase and clocked 9:31.38 seconds.

Both Sable and Parul have already qualified for the Paris Olympic Games and are based out of Colorado Springs.

On the other hand, a steady performance of plus 80m mark in back-to-back competitions in May and June should benefit Manu to gain valuable world ranking points.

The 24 years old army's thrower has a personal best of 84.35m and he won silver with a throw of 82.06m earlier in May at a domestic meet in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

The talented javelin thrower claimed first position at the Taiwan Open meet on June 1. His best throw was 81.58m.

His Road to Paris ranking is 11th on June 6 and he has 1240 points in his kitty. The automatic qualification mark in men's javelin is 85.50m.

Long jumper Nayana James and middle distance runner Ankesh also won gold in their

respective events in Taiwan Open. Nayana's gold medal performance was 6.43m. While Ankesh Chaudhary clocked 1:50.63 to finish first in the men's 800m.

Somnath Chauhan won silver in 800m with a time of 1:50.88 and Dev Meena scaled 5.10m to win second place in men's pole vault.

Vismaya won bronze in the women's 400m. She clocked 53.49 seconds.

Gulveer Singh enters his name in record books

Army's 26 years old Asian Games medalist, Gulveer Singh, continues his good run on the track by improving the men's 5,000m national record.



On June 9 in Portland, USA, he clocked 13:18.92 seconds to better the previous mark of 13:19.30 set by steeplechase specialist Avinash Sable in 2023.

On his way to national record, he finished second at the Portland's Track Festival. Earlier, in March he shattered the men's 10,000m national record during a race in California. He clocked 27:41.81 to improve the previous record of 28:02.89 seconds in the name of Surendra Singh set in 2008 in Spain.

The army runner is currently based out of Colorado Springs, USA. He practices with a core group of Indian middle and long distance runners. The national camp in preparation for the Paris Olympic Games is being supported by REC Limited.

PUMA IS THE OFFICIAL SPORTS KIT OF THE INDIAN ATHLETICS TEAM

