

# NEWSLETTER



## 4<sup>TH</sup> SOUTH ASIAN SENIOR ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS



# JOHAR

Inside  
Story

**pg- 02** | Red carpet for South Asian Athletics Championships squad in Ranchi

**pg- 06** | Javelin thrower Sachin Yadav to focus on fitness ahead of 2026 season

# **Red carpet** for South Asian Athletics Championships squad in Ranchi



**The Jharkhand government laid a red carpet for the contingent of the fourth Senior South Asian Athletics Championships held between October 24 to 26 at the Birsa Munda (Morabadi) Stadium, Ranchi.**

It was heartening that the state Chief Minister, Hemant Soren, closely monitored all the necessary arrangements and pressed the state machinery into action for the smooth conduct of the three-day competition that attracted more than 200 athletes from South Asian countries.

The Chief Minister declared the three-day meet open. "We welcome all to enjoy the hospitality," the Chief Minister said in his opening address.

"Jharkhand is home to several elite sportspersons, including archers and hockey players," Soren said. "It is an honour for us to host such sporting events."

Apart from India, other participating nations were Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

Jharkhand's minister of state for sports and youth affairs Sudivya Kumar said the grand success of the event was mainly due to collective effort of all the stakeholders, including the Government of Jharkhand and the Athletics Federation of India.

To continue holistic development of sports in the region, the Jharkhand government invited school and college students to watch top athletes in action.

The South Asian Athletics Championships gave an opportunity to several young athletes to showcase their potential in an international event

on home soil.

India's rising middle distance runner Sanjana Singh was declared the best female athlete of the 2025 South Asian Athletics Championships. The teenager won gold medals in women's 5,000m and 1500m.

Sri Lanka's national record holder in men's javelin, Pathirage Rumesh T, took home the best male athlete trophy. He won the gold in men's javelin throw with a distance of 84.29m. "The hospitality was good," Pathirage said.

There was a keen contest between host India and Sri Lanka to clinch the overall trophy. The home team, with 20 gold medals, topped the chart. India also won an equal number of silver medals and 18 bronze to take home the overall trophy.

Sri Lanka settled for the runners-up trophy as they won 16 gold, 14 silver and 10 bronze medals.



**Jharkhand is home to several elite sportspersons, including archers and hockey players," Soren said. "It is an honour for us to host such sporting events.**

# Inaugural edition of National Indoor Championships in January

**The inaugural edition of the National Indoor Championships will be held in January, Bahadur Singh Sagoo, president of AFI (Athletics Federation of India) said. “The National Indoor Championships was on the cards and we have incorporated it in the 2026 domestic calendar,” the AFI president added. “Bhubaneswar’s indoor stadium in Odisha will be the venue for the first edition of the competition.”**

**A**ccording to Sagoo apart from National Indoor Championships the AFI also plans to conduct indoor competition in pole vault (men and women) and heptathlon. “The 2026 domestic calendar will be exciting,” he added. Events for the indoor heptathlon for men consists of seven disciplines spread over two days. The events are 60m, long jump, shot put, high jump, 60m hurdles, pole vault and 1,000m. The first four events are held on day-one while the remaining three events on day-two of the gruelling competition. The 2026 domestic calendar will be finalised shortly, Sagoo added. “The packed 2026 domestic calendar will feature close to 40 competitions,” the AFI president said. “The main focus is to strengthen the domestic ecosystem.”

The AFI had introduced regional competitions in the 2025 calendar year. The response was good, the AFI president said. “Regional events in the South and North Zone attracted a good number of athletes this year. Hence there is a plan to further increase the number to provide opportunities to young athletes,” the AFI president added.



As part of its programme to build a solid domestic foundation, the 2026 domestic calendar will be structured keeping in mind two major multidiscipline competitions--- Commonwealth Games and Asian,” Sagoo added.

The AFI shortlisted more than 15 venues across the country to conduct the regional level events in 2025, including Anju Bobby Sports Foundation in Bengaluru. “Regional competitions in the neighbourhood gave more opportunities to promising athletes to showcase their potential. Having quality competition in the backyard saves time as well as money as the athlete has to travel short distances to compete,” the AFI president said.

# Asian Indoor Championships in Bhubaneswar

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) has expressed interest to conduct two major continental competitions—Asian Relay in 2027 and Asian Indoor Championships in 2028.

International competitions, says Bahadur Singh Sagoo, president AFI, on the home soil will give more opportunity to promising athletes to showcase their talent on the home soil. “International exposure on the home soil is part of the AFI development plan. At the same time continental and global competitions will give opportunity to youngsters to watch top athletes in action,” the AFI president adds. According to Sagoo, the AFI—national governing body of track and field in India, has submitted a bid document to conduct Asian Relay Championships in 2027 and Asian Indoor Championships in 2028. “We are excited to conduct both the events in future,” Sagoo says.

The inaugural edition of the Asian Relay Championships was

held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2024. The 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 adds.

Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar’s indoor athletics track in Odisha has all the facilities to conduct continental and global competitions. “There is an adequate warmup area,” Sagoo says. “The Indoor competition will be held in February 2028.”

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. “Several states in the country are coming forward to conduct international track and field competition,” Sagoo says. “It’s good for the development of Olympic discipline in the country.”



# Javelin thrower Sachin Yadav to focus on fitness ahead of 2026 season

**A**sian championships silver medallist and finalist at Tokyo World Athletics Championships, javelin thrower Sachin Yadav, has started his preparation for an exciting 2026 season.

The 26 years old javelin thrower plans to improve his physical fitness to achieve new goals in the 2026 season. "Better physical fitness will certainly enable him (Sachin) to improve his overall performance and at the same time stay injury free," Chief national athletics coach Radhakrishnan Nair said.

Sachin Yadav's personal and season best of 86.27m was achieved in Tokyo.

After an excellent run this season that culminated with fourth place finish at the 2025 Tokyo World Athletics Championships held from September 13 to 21 in Japan, the Asian silver medallist has his eyes firmly on a podium at 2026 Commonwealth Games and Asian Games.

The promising Indian javelin thrower began the 2025 season with a gold medal at the Uttarakhand National Games. Despite skipping vital training sessions due to an ankle niggle, he gave a good account of himself at the 2025 Asian Athletics Championships held in May in Gumi, South Korea.

He won silver in Gumi with a throw of 85.16m, which further brightened his



chances to improve his global ranking points and eventually qualify for the Worlds in Japan.

In Tokyo he narrowly missed bronze on his debut at the Worlds. "The journey to the 2025 World Athletics Championships was exciting," Sachin Yadav said. "I plan to continue to raise the bar in the 2026 season."

# Putting their best foot forward to regain lost ground

**Four top athletes---**Gulveer Singh (long distance), Avinash Sable (steeplechase), Mohd Ajmal (400m) and Jyothi Yarraji (100m hurdles) are putting their best forward to regain their lost ground and excel in the 2026 season.

All four athletes had to skip vital training sessions due to injuries in the 2025 season. After extensive rehab and recovery, they are back to training with an eye firmly on the 2026 season that features two major multi-discipline events---Commonwealth Games and Asian Games.

Gulveer Singh, Jyothi Yarraji and Avinash Sable won medals in their respective events at the Hangzhou Asian Games held in 2023 in China. While Ajmal was one of the key members of the Indian men's 4x400m relay team.

After enduring a low back pain last month, India's multiple national record holder in distance track races, including 10,000m, Gulveer Singh is back to training. Based out of Ooty in Tamil Nadu, he is also following a rehabilitation programme to avoid recurring back pain. "I'm getting better. I've started general training," Gulveer Singh said.

Asian Games champion in steeplechase, Avinash Sable sustained a knee injury during a freak incident earlier this season at Monaco Diamond League. A nasty fall in the initial stages of the steeplechase left the Indian bruised and injured. The injury forced Avinash Sable to skip the Tokyo World Athletics Championships in September in Japan. After knee surgery and rehabilitation, he is back to normal



practice. "He (Sable) has started training in Bengaluru," Radhakrishnan Nair, chief national athletics coach said.

Miles away Jyothi Yarraji too has started training in Mumbai. The Asian Games medallist and national record holder in women's 100m hurdles, was sidelined due to injury. She had to skip the Worlds in September in Japan.

"I'm back to routine training, including strengthening drills. As I get better, I will start speed sessions," Jyothi said. "The main focus next year will be the Commonwealth and Asian Games."

# World Athletics Ultimate Championship in Budapest

**T**he World Athletics Ultimate Championship scheduled to be held next year from September 11 to 13 in Budapest, Hungary, says chief athletics coach Radhakrishnan Nair, will be another opportunity for Indian athletes to rub shoulders with the global athletes.

“The three-day competition in Budapest will be part of the international exposure,” Nair said.

The Ultimate Championship is not a World Athletics series and invitation to compete will be limited as there is no entry or qualification system.

Olympic champion from Paris 2024, the 2025 Tokyo World champion and winner of 2026 Diamond League final in Brussels will be eligible to compete at the Ultimate Championship. Invitation will also be based on world ranking during September 2, 2025 to September 1 2026.

The number of entries in each of the

events will be limited. For 100, 200m, 400 and 800 only 16 athletes will be eligible.

The 1500m and 5,000 will have 12 competitors in fray while in hurdles competition there will be 16 athletes. Each of the jump competitions will have eight athletes and eight teams will compete in relay events.

The Ultimate Championship programme features women’s and men’s competition in the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 5000m, 100m hurdles/110m 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 relay has also been added.

In the semifinals, the top four in each semis will make it through to the final. The 1500m, 5000m and relay races will be straight finals.

## Empowering young girls through ASMITA League

**T**he Athletics Federation of India (AFI) in coordination with Sports Authority of India (SAI) will conduct the inaugural edition of ASMITA league athletics competition at district level from November 10 to 30 across the country in 300 venues. “We have identified 300 districts to conduct competition for young girls in the age group of U14 and U16,” Bahadur Singh Sagoo, president AFI said. “The main goal is to encourage more and more girls to take part in sports activities.” The ASMITA league district competition will be a good platform for budding athletes to showcase their potential.

According to the AFI president, during the competition talent identification teams will also scout athletes having potential to excel at the world level in future.

# Jubilant members of 3rd Asian Youth Games

