



Press Release

Romika Sharma – the escort behind Sheetal Devi’s success laps up Khelo India Para Games

December 16, New Delhi : Romika Sharma remains a very important figure in Sheetal Devi’s life. While the inspirational teenager Sheetal turns heads around the world, Romika quietly does the job as one of the most integral figures in Sheetal’s support team.

Sheetal won the coveted gold medal in the Individual Compound Women’s Open category at the Para Archery event of the Khelo India Para Games on Saturday. She won the final fight-off against Jyoti Baliyan of Uttar Pradesh 141-138.

“Sheetal was not competing for a while after the Asian Para Games but now I’m happy with her scores here. She made it to the final in a good fashion and now has the gold medal. Sheetal told me she is happy with the arrangements here at the Khelo India Para Games. There is no difference between this competition and international tournaments,” Romika said.

Romika, a compound archer herself, is the escort of Sheetal during international events. The Jammu & Kashmir duo’s chemistry during the Para Archery event at the JLN Stadium, Delhi, could not be missed.

“I feel very happy to be Sheetal’s escort. I met her at the Nationals three years back on the request of coach Kuldeep Vedwan and from then, I started being close to her,” Romika mentioned on the sidelines of the Khelo India Para Games.

Apart from helping para athletes during their day-to-day activities, the work of an escort involves off-field assistance as well. Speaking on her everyday work with Sheetal, the 22-year-old adds, “I oversee her practice sessions, carry the arrows, luggages, besides supervising her stretching work as well as ensuing her scoring. Off the field also, I help in feeding her as well as speaking to her whenever she needs a helping hand.

“I feel more like a sister to her [Sheetal] even though I’m a good friend of her,” continues Romika. “Whenever she is travelling anywhere alone, I feel anxious on how she is doing. She is a little ‘ziddi’ (persistent) as well as ‘masoom’ (innocent) and also watches a lot of serials!

“We are inseparable,” Romika said.

Romika also recalled moments from the Asian Para Games 2022 where Sheetal won three medals (2 gold, 1 silver) and made history, becoming the first armless archer in the world to do so.

“I was standing just beside her during the last arrows in the Individual Compound final (where Sheetal won the gold). There was tension all around and I missed Kuldeep sir there. But I kept telling her, ‘Tujhe coach ne jo sikhaya, who yaad rakh’ (Remember what coach sir taught you!),” mentions Romika.
