

Press Release

Sprinter Avantika Narale wears favourite tag with confidence and comfort

Pune, January 8: Avantika Narale wears her favourite's tag with confidence, comfort and awareness. The 15-year-old Punekar, who rewrote Dutee Chand's 200m national junior record, wants to lower her personal best time at the Khelo India Youth Games 2019 this week to such an extent that the record remains in her name for some years.

"Yes, I want to get personal best times and lower the national junior record so much that it remains in my name for some years," she says after completing a couple of media interviews. "My coaches Sanjay Patankar and Sudhakar Memane and I have set clear targets for this week. And I am confident that I can achieve them."

The fastest girl at KISG 2018 in Delhi, she also claimed the sprint double at the national junior athletics championships in Ranchi last November. She clocked 12.38s in the 100m and 24.96s in the 200m to break Dutee Chand's record in the Under-16 division.

Later, at the SGFI National School Games, she logged 12.08s and 24.60s.

Avantika is keen to draw more attention in the hope of alleviating her family's financial position. Her father, Santosh Narale, has given up his work as a plumber, to be with her. "I am sure that I will be able to help my family overcome tough situation but I have been blessed to have them and other mentors by my side," she says.

Her eyes sparkle with intensity as she breaks into a wide grin when recalling that her maiden appearance on track at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Balewadi near here. "My teacher, Shivaji Mehetre, who used to see me play kabaddi, asked me to run for our school. I ran barefoot and I ended up blisters and the gold medal."

A 10th standard student of the Lonkar Mahavidyalaya, she is grateful to the school for letting her pursue her passion without insisting on attendance.

Confidently, Avantika explains a three-point agenda - win another medal for the state, set a time no one can beat at KIYG and lastly go on to do India proud at the coming Asian Youth Athletics Championship 2019 in Hong Kong.

Her talk is backed by the two sprint doubles she ended up with at two championships in 2018.

Avantika remains a breakaway story of success who believes if there is a will there is a way. "On my home track, I want to do something special for my parents and for all those who have believed in my talent," she says.