

Press Release

They keep the wheels of the KIYG 2019 Games in motion

Pune, January 14: The task of making sure 6,000-plus athletes and more than a couple of thousand officials and volunteers get from widespread accommodation clusters on time to and from the various Khelo India Youth Games venues in Mhalunge-Balewadi, Khadakvasla, Mundhwa and others is one that can test the coolest head.

Add to the mix over 280 vehicles, 300-plus drivers and almost 500 support staff to keep this enterprise running, and you realize that Vijay Santan, in normal times the District Sports Officer of Pune, has his hands full 24/7.

Not that it is apparent as Santan downplays the size of his task with a wave of his hand. "We had been preparing for the Games for some time so there were quite a few systems in place by the end of last week itself. Of course, it would have helped if the decision to base the Games here in Pune had been taken a bit earlier, but we are managing well enough," he explains.

Four trips to and from the six accommodation clusters are made on a daily basis and though the numbers have already started to fluctuate with the Games entering their second week, the initial few days were hectic.

"The first few days are always a test of how well one prepares. Athletes and officials were arriving from all over the country so we had to have vehicles and staff placed at the airport, the railway station and even the bus stations so make sure everything went smoothly. Touch wood, there was no crisis of any kind," Santan says.

"We had extensive training sessions for the drivers and their assistants, besides assigned volunteers and other staff ahead of KIYG. So in that sense, everyone knew what to expect. Plus we had redundancies built into our planning. For example, every cluster has a set number of backup vehicles in case of mechanical issues. Then there are repair crews as and when needed."

All that may be so, but there is always the human factor. "So far, we have actually encountered no major problems in this first week. There is a central control to track all the vehicles and to which those in charge at the cluster points report so there is no lack in coordination. We actually had a separate fleet dedicated to the arrival phase in the run-up to the Games," Santan adds.

A standardized format, early planning and preparation and a clear-cut overall vehicle management policy have ensured that the wheels have stayed rolling smoothly thus far at KIYG and the inevitable potholes catered for in advance.