

## Press Release

### Government schemes have helped in state's progress in sport, says Gujarat official Oza

**Pune, January 14:** Gujarat has made an impressive start to the Khelo India Youth Games 2019, bagging more medals at the halfway stage than they did in their entire campaign at the Khelo India School Games last year. As on Sunday evening they had won nine gold, six silver and eleven bronze.

Their athletes have shown great heart and haven't backed down from challenges put forth by athletes from other big states like Maharashtra, Delhi, Karnataka, Haryana, to name a few.

Speaking about the Gujarat contingent, official Bhaumik Kumar Oza took the opportunity to laud the schemes run by the Gujarat Government that have played a major role in the development of sport in the state.

Schemes like Shaktidoot, COE, and State Academy have been supporting young athletes and providing them with the financial support that is vital for them to keep performing at the highest level.

He added, "We pick out players based on their performances at the national level and take them under these schemes where they receive financial help based on the groups they are segregated in, ranging from Rs. 2.5 lakh to as high as Rs. 25 lakh. We even receive applications from local players through various means for enrollment to the schemes."

He spoke about how some of the biggest names representing Gujarat at the KIYG have been a part of these schemes for several years. The likes of swimmers Maana Patel and Kalyani Saxena, athletes Ajeet Kumar Yadav and Dhawal Utekar and judokas Suhana Shaikh and Sonal Dodiya are some of the players who have made it big at the KIYG and have been helped greatly through the schemes.

Star swimmer Maana Patel also thanked the Sports Authority of Gujarat and the Shaktidoot scheme for their constant support.

"We keep adding to the categories we have in the schemes to try and accommodate more players and we are proud to see so many young athletes making fast progress. We have made a great start and we hope to add to the medal tally," concluded Oza.

#### **Gujarat Results (only gold):**

Athletics: **Ajeet Kumar Yadav** (1,500m and 5,000m); **Dhawal Utekar** (400 Mtr Hurdles)

Badminton: **Mir Tasnim Irfan Ali** (Singles – Girls Under-17)

Judo: **Sonal B Dodiya** (Below 40kg); **Suhana Iqbal Shaikh** (Below 57 kg)

Shooting: **Heena Jayeshbhai Gohei** (10 M Air Rifle)

Swimming: **Maana Patel** (200m backstroke); **Kalyani Saxena** (400 Medley)