

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Ahmedabad will soon have the world's biggest sports city, home minister Amit Shah declares at launch function of 36th National Games

Games anthem and mascot unveiled at glittering function attended by Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel and Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur

Ahmedabad, September 4:

Union home minister Amit Shah declared that the city of Ahmedabad would soon be developed into the world's biggest sports city in the world.

Speaking at the unveiling function of the anthem and mascot for the 36th National Games at the EKA Arena, TransStadia here in Ahmedabad, Mr Shah, said: "Ten years ago, when Modiji was the chief minister here, he started the Khel Mahakumbh. At that time Gujarat was nowhere in sports on the global map.

"Now, we have the Narendra Modi Stadium, the largest stadium in the world, and very soon we will have the world's biggest sports city too," Mr Shah said, addressing over 10,000 people at the majestic venue.

The Home Minister, who is also the MP from Gandhi Nagar, led a power-packed audience at the glittering Curtain-Function, including Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel and Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Anurag Thakur. The country's grandest sporting extravaganza will take place in six cities of Gujarat, from September 29 to October 12.

"Once upon a time, we Gujjus were mostly seen as just businessmen. But Modiji started Khel Mahakumbh 11 years back and that event has become so big that as many as 55 lakh youngsters took part in this edition. We even offered a whopping Rs 29 crore as prize money to the winners," Gujarat chief minister Bhupendra Patel said.

"We are delighted that the National Games are back after 7 years and this will one will be the biggest and grandest ever," Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur said. "It normally takes years to organise an event of this scale but Gujarat did this in less than three months. It is all thanks to the efforts of the CM, with IOA supporting our initiative in a big way. Over 12,000 athletes, officials and support stage will enjoy not only the sporting extravaganza but also the garba here," he added.

Top dignitaries from the world of politics and sport were present on the occasion, including Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Gujarat Minister for Sports and IOA secretary general Rajeev Mehta. The mayors of all six host cities, including Kiritkumar J Parmar (Ahmedabad), Hemali Boghawala

(Surat), Keyur Rokadiya (Vadodara), Pradip Dav (Rajkot), Kirti Danidhariya (Bhavnagar), Hitesh Makwana (Gandhinagar) were also present.

The winners of the Khel Mahakumbh, including the top 3 schools, districts and municipal corporations of the state, were felicitated shortly before the launch of the mascot.

Aptly titled saavaj, lion in Gujarati, the mascot represents India's cultural heritage while also giving a glimpse of a rapidly growing India which is set to become a global leader again.

The anthem of the Games, encapsulating the philosophy of Judega India, Jitega India, has been rendered by Bollywood star singer Sukhwinder Singh.

The lyrics of the national sports festival's theme song inspire the youth of the country to connect and conquer historic places like the Statue of Unity and Sabarmati. Embellished with impressive sports scenes, the theme song captures the heart of how athletes triumph despite adversity.