



Press Release

Union Sports Minister Shri Anurag Singh Thakur declares first-ever Khelo India Para Games 2023 open at dazzling ceremony

Packed with euphoric cultural performances, the opening ceremony enthralled over 1400 participants and delegates from across 32 States and Union Territories

The Khelo India Para Games is being held between Dec 10-17 in Delhi

New Delhi, 11 December 2023: Shri Anurag Singh Thakur, Hon'ble Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports and Department of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, formally declared the Khelo India Para Games 2023 open in a dazzling ceremony here at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall in New Delhi.

Over 1450 participants from 32 states and Union Territories and Services Sports Board will participate in these Games between December 10 and 17 at three venues in Delhi.

The glitzy event witnessed scintillating performance by the Himachal Pradesh Police Band whose melody invoked patriotism. There was also a Kalbeliya dance performance by SAI officials, followed by a peppy ensemble by dance artists of 'We Are One' group that depicted para dancing. The Games anthem set the ball rolling at the opening ceremony while an LED dance performance on the theme 'Evolution of Para Games' enticed the audience.

Accompanied by legends in para sports, Deepa Malik, Bhavina Patel, Sumit Antil and more, Shri Anurag Thakur participated in the torch relay before declaring the Khelo India Para Games open.

“This is a historic moment for Indian sports as the first-ever Khelo India Para Games is being held in the national Capital setting the ball rolling for a new movement in the sports eco system of the country. This initiative is a significant step towards providing equal opportunities for all athletes, regardless of their abilities. Khelo India Para Games signifies the New India,” Shri Anurag Thakur said.

Encouraging the participants, Shri Anurag Thakur said, “It feels very proud, to recognise your efforts to come and participate here. There are over 3000 people including athletes and officials who are here for the Games and a total of 276 gold medals are up for grabs. I wish each and every athlete the very best.”

Congratulating the efforts of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), Shri Nisith Parmanik, Union Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs and Union Minister of State, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports said, “We are grateful to the Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi who implemented the use of the word Divyang instead of the word Viklang, and he insisted on not using the word disabled but call them differently-abled. It is his visionary efforts that is encouraging people to change their thinking.

“I also congratulate Shri Anurag Thakur and the entire team at MYAS for their efforts in taking Indian sports to new heights through the Khelo India program, there is no doubt that India can bag more than 200 medals by 2030 at the Asian Para Games,” he added.

The central government's aim behind organizing the Khelo India Para Games is to empower all para athletes. The government has initiated several key projects for the welfare of the differently-abled.

The inaugural Khelo India Para Games is being organized at three venues – Indira Gandhi Stadium, Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium and Karni Singh Shooting Range. Competition will be held in seven para sports athletics, shooting, archery, football, badminton, table tennis and weightlifting. Some of India’s top international para stars like Sheetal Devi, Bhavina Patel, Ashok and others will participate.

After the immense success of Khelo India Youth Games and Khelo India University Games, now Khelo India Para Games is being organized and there is an atmosphere of celebration in the national capital regarding Khelo India Para Games being organized for the first time. This week-long sports festival will be a symbol of inclusivity as well celebrate human dignity.