

Press Release

Maharashtra pick up steam and increase lead in medals race at Khelo India Youth Games

Pune, Jan 13: Hosts Maharashtra picked crucial gold medals in almost every discipline to race ahead of the other states in the Khelo India Youth Games. The hosts, powered by four gold each from swimming and gymnastics, also picked more gold from athletics, badminton and judo to race away past the 50-mark for gold medals.

Maharashtra now has 56 gold, a sharp move up from their overnight 41 gold, and they also have 44 silver and 56 bronze for a whopping total of 156 medals.

Despite fighting hard and picking up nine gold medals, which included three each from judo and swimming, Delhi were still lagging behind in the race for overall supremacy. Delhi now have 45 gold, 27 silver and 38 bronze, while Haryana, last year's champions in Khelo India School Games, have 33 gold, 34 silver and 36 bronze.

The top three states have all crossed the 100-mark in medals, and Maharashtra has gone past 150.

Among the individual stars of the day, 10-year-old Abhinav Shaw stood out as he teamed up with Mehuli Ghosh to take the gold in the 10m Air Rifle mixed team event. The 10-year-old from Asansol became the youngest gold medallist at the Khelo India Youth Games and along with Mehuli Ghosh helped West Bengal win the 10m air rifle mixed team event here today. It was Mehuli's second gold, as she had picked one a day earlier.

If it was Manavadiya Rathore, son of India's first Olympic individual silver medallist, Col Rajyavardhan Rathore, the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, who held the spotlight a day earlier, today it was Devanshi, daughter of former pistol legend Jaspal Rana, who is now the National junior pistol coach. Devanshi Rana won the Under-21 junior women's 25m pistol gold as she held off a challenge by Haryana's resurgent Anjali Choudhary.

Nithin and Daneshwari complete sprint doubles in athletics

Tamil Nadu's Balakumar Nithin and Karnataka's AT Daneshwari emerged as the country's top sprinters as both of them completed the 100m-200m double.

Nithin's under-21 200m gold medal-winning time of 21.57 seconds at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex this afternoon, would have fetched him a top 16 rank in India last year. His performance could well earn him a Khelo India scholarship.

Daneshwari also completed the sprint double, winning the girls under-21 200m in 24.58 seconds. She was, however, overshadowed by Maharashtra's Avantika Narale. The under-17 runner, who missed out on the 100m final, scripted a run in the 200m final that was faster than Daneshwari's time by a hundredth of a second.

Another performance that raised expectations was a 19.20m shot put effort by Amandeep Singh Dhaliwal (Punjab) in the boys under-17 division.

National junior champion Aakarshi Kashyap from Chhatisgarh won the Girls Under-21 gold medal in badminton beating Maharashtra's Malvika Bansod, which was a repeat of Khelo India School Games final, where Malvika had won.

Yuga leads Maharashtra's charge in swimming

Yuga Birnale led Maharashtra's charge with three medals today, including two gold, as the hosts maintained their domination in the pool over Karnataka and Delhi. Of the 12 gold at the stake today, Maharashtra picked up four while Delhi and Karnataka took three each.

Yuga gave the hosts their first gold of the day in the women's U-21 200m medley in a time of 2:32.75. She clinched her a bronze in the 200m backstroke, clocking 2:34.09 behind Gujarat's Maana Patel (2:23,00) and Bengal's Soubrity Mondal (2:29.80). Yuga collected her third medal in the 4x100 m medley as part of Maharashtra quartet, thanks to Aakanksha Buchade and Sadhvi Dhuri's fine efforts.

After Maharashtra's Kenisha Gupta clinched gold in a lopsided girls under-17 200m individual medley in 2:29.68, Vedant Bapna won the State's fourth gold. He faced no resistance in the boys Under-17 200m backstroke final.

Judokas from Delhi halt Maharashtra

One of the sports where the Maharashtra domination was halted was in judo, where Delhi, led by India internationals Sachin Malik (Boys Under-21; above 100kg), a Macau Asian Cup 2018, bronze medallists and Tulika Maan (Girls Under-21; above 78kgs), Asia Cup gold medallist in Macau helped their state win three more gold medals to finish with a tally of a complete dozen in the judo competition that ended on Sunday. For Delhi, apart from Sachin and Tulika, the third winner for was Reetika Dahiya (Girls Under-21; Below-63kgs).

Delhi topped in both the Under-17 and Under-21 sections with six gold in each category. On the final day of the judo competition, while Delhi claimed three, Punjab won two while the other three were shared one each by Haryana, Manipur and hosts Maharashtra.

Semi-finals spotted in U-21 Boys football as Punjab, Goa move up

The semi-finals was reached in football, where Punjab and Goa chalked out contrasting victories over their respective rivals in Group B to qualify for the semi-finals in the U-21 Boys football competition.

In Boys Under-21 Punjab overpowered Manipur 2-0 while Goa downed Karnataka 1-0 to record their second successive victories and that assured them a place in the semi-finals with six points each.