



Khelo India University Games 2021 kicks off with a glitzy opening ceremony

~ Honourable Vice President Shri M Venkaiah Naidu declared the Games open ~

Bengaluru, 24 April 2022: Breath-taking performances depicting Karnataka's rich cultural heritage and a captivating sound and light show added to the grandeur of a sparkling opening ceremony of the 2nd Khelo India University Games 2021 here at the Sree Kanteerava Indoor Stadium on Sunday, 24th April 2022.

Representing the hosts Jain University in KIUG 2021, the youngest Indian swimmer to achieve Olympic standard time - Srihari Nataraj took the oath on behalf of all athletes after the Games were declared open by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu - Hon'ble Vice President of India in the presence of Shri Thaawar Chand Gehlot – Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka.

The opening ceremony was also graced by Shri Basavaraj Bommai - Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur - Hon'ble Union Minister Of Youth Affairs and Sports, and Nisith Pramanik, Union Minister of State, Youth Affairs and Sports, and Narayana Gowda – Hon'ble Minister of Youth Empowerment and Sports of Karnataka.

Sports legends such as Vimal Kumar, Anju Bobby George, Reeth Abraham, Ashwini Nachappa, Malathi Holla, BR Beedu, AB Subbiah, SV Sunil, VR Raghunath were also part of the opening ceremony were KY Venkatesh, Sahana SM, Shashikanth Naik, Sahana SM, Manikandan, Thanya Hemanth, Farman Basha.

Declaring the KIUG 2021 open, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu - Hon'ble Vice President of India said, "I appeal to all youngsters across the country to make sports a part of their lives so that you can lead a meaningful life. Playing some game of your choice will make you physically fit and mentally alert and we can really take the country forward. We are again regaining momentum in sports with importance given by the Govt. of India, and the Sports Ministry, once again, as was seen at the Tokyo Olympics. This edition of Khelo India will also feature indigenous sports such as Yogasana and Mallakhamba, and it is heartening to see. It is of utmost importance for us to promote and preserve our indigenous sports which are rooted in our culture, and a matter of pride for us."



There was also a special video message by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi played on the big screen, which was welcomed with roaring applause by the young audience. Congratulating the city of Bengaluru for hosting the prestigious Games, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said, "The city of Bengaluru in itself is a symbol of the nation's youth. In the era of Digital India and this city of startups, this intersection with sports is unique. Hosting the Khelo India University Games will add to the immense energy of this beautiful city. I congratulate the Government of Karnataka for the organization of these vital Games. Hosting these Games while contending with a global pandemic is a testament to the resolve and passion for sports among the people of India. I salute the courage of the people of Karnataka."

Welcoming nearly 4000 athletes to India's tech capital Bengaluru, Shri Basavaraj Bommai - Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka expressed, "It is our pleasure and privilege to host Khelo India University Games 2021 in Bengaluru. It adds to our pleasure that Hon'ble Vice-President of India, Shri Venkaiah Naidu, and Hon'ble Union Minister Of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Anurag Thakur joined us at the Opening Ceremony of such an important tournament in Bengaluru. KIUG 2021 is a great opportunity for us to prove our hospitality and our dedication to maintaining the national integrity of our nation and culture. PM Narendra Modi has given the impetus and a new dimension to our sporting world with his mission of Khelo India."

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur - Hon'ble Union Minister Of Youth Affairs and Sports said, "When the first KIUG took place in Odisha, there was great pride and enthusiasm among people. But then, all our lives were affected by Covid and we had to wait nearly two years to return with Khelo India University Games 2022. After two years, it is the first opportunity for us to assemble together for the University Games and I see a similar passion among the youngsters this time around. With close to 4000 participants from nearly 200 Universities, this is the largest multi-discipline event taking place in the state of Karnataka. I visited the hosts, Jain University, and met over 500 enthusiastic athletes who will be taking part in the competition. I was also very happy to see that world-class facilities have been provided for the Games there, which are truly one of the best all-around in the world."

KIUG 2021 anthem a big hit

While a line-up of cultural programmes such as dollu kunitha, a traditional folk dance enthralled the audience of 2500 attendees, a peppy dance ensemble for the Khelo India University Games Anthem composed by pop icon Chandan Shetty got the spectators tapping their feet to the catchy number.

High octane performances by drummers – Kerala Chande, Nashik Dhols & Punjabi dhols from across the country set the mood of the 10-day sporting event which has drawn participation from various



parts of the nation. New addition to this year's Khelo India University Games, Mallakhamba, a traditional sport dating back to the 12th century which showcases the skillset of youth in an indigenous manner, was also intricately displayed during the opening ceremony. This was followed by an amazing acrobatic performance by popular youth artists Kings United left the young audience wanting more.

A host of sports fans braved the tightened security to witness the opening ceremony on a giant screen erected outside the stadium.

The opening ceremony was broadcast on DD Sports, All India Radio, and Radio City.

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