

## Press Release

### **Hegiste ready to take on Yadav's sprint challenge; Sneha, Poorna also all set for athletics competition**

**Pune, January 9:** Andhra Pradesh's Bharat Yadav and Maharashtra's Karan Hegiste will offer a taste of the high level of competition in athletics at the Khelo India Youth Games here at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex on Thursday.

Expected to compete for the blue riband 100m gold in the Under-17 section, the sprinters will be among the first athletes to take to the track.

Then there are athletes like Satara's hammer thrower, Sneha Jadhav, who won the Junior Nationals last year, and Mumbai-based shot putter Poorna Raorane, who also won in Junior Nationals in Ranchi.

Bharat said, "I missed the junior nationals in Ranchi with an injury but am well prepared to win here. Indicating a raging desire to make up for the disappointment of being disqualified for a false start in the 100m final of the Khelo India School Games in Delhi last year, he added, "I haven't been entered in the 200m and hence will strive hard to win this."

With some doubt about national junior champion Nisar Ahmed's participation in the Under-21 section, the battle between Rahul Sharma (Uttar Pradesh) and Abhinav Chalangode (Kerala) will be an interesting one considering that they claimed the lesser medals behind the Delhi lad in Ranchi.

The sprint heats will herald the track and field competition in which more than 600 athletes from 29 States and seven Union Territories will bid to grab the spotlight. The biggest of the draws, though could be two-time Asian junior 400m champion Jisna Mathew (Kerala), Uttarakhand's Anu Kumar, who the middle-distance double in KISG 2018 and Maharashtra's Tai Bamhane.

Of course, there are others like 19-year-old hammer thrower Sneha Jadhav who hails from the small village of Hajarmaji in Maharashtra's Satara district. She represented India in the World School Games 2016 in Turkey and in the Youth Asian Games 2017 in Bangkok.

Sneha is among those who will strain their every sinew to give Maharashtra the edge over Haryana.

Mumbai-based shot putter Poorna Raorane, who won gold in Ranchi with a final effort of 15.30m to slip past Punjab's Parmjot Kaur, said she was ready to repeat her feat. The 12th standard student of Bombay Suburb District Grain School, Malad, employs the rotational throw technique, rarely used by women putters. Poorna finished fourth in the World School Games in Turkey.