



SPECIAL OLYMPICS
Unified Cup
CHICAGO 2018

Presented by **TOYOTA**

17-20 July 2018 | Chicago



Unified Cup 2018 Special- *celebration of 50yrs of the Special Olympics movement*

Greetings from Special Olympics Bharat

Join the Revolution!

Challenging people across the globe to join our ["Revolution is Inclusion"](#) campaign — an all-out effort to end discrimination against people with intellectual disabilities

Special Olympics celebrated the organization's 50th anniversary with a series of events in Chicago USA, the birthplace of Special Olympics from 17-21 July 2018. The celebrations spread across the first ever Special Olympics Unified Cup presented by TOYOTA —with unified football where 24 female and male teams of athletes with and without intellectual disabilities from all over the world competed — to the lighting of the Eternal Flame of Hope monument, the Special Olympics Drive to the Global Day of Inclusion festival that concluded with a star-studded concert headlined by Chicago's Chance the Rapper

50 years ago, the first Special Olympics competition was held in Chicago's Soldier Field for young people with intellectual disabilities. The goal was to put a bright—and very public—spotlight on ability, not disability. On 20 July 1968, 1,000 athletes from Canada and the United States competed in over 200 events including swimming, floor hockey, and track and field.



Supported by Herbalife Nutrition, a Unified Football female team of six athletes with intellectual disability and 5 athletes without Intellectual Disability from India participated at the event following a series of training Camps held since March 2018. The participants and coaches arrived from the states of Delhi, Goa, Maharashtra, Punjab, Kerala and Rajasthan. Having practiced under the meticulous supervision of Mr Victor R Vaz, National Sports Director, SO Bharat and also regularly in their respective states, the team competed with Mexico, Egypt and Korea at the Unified Cup in Chicago (SOUFC 2018)



The Opening Ceremony- *LIVE PLAY & WORK Unified*

The Opening Ceremony was held on 17 July 2018 at the CIBC Fire pitch, Toyota Park Chicago reverberating the message of building up a barrier free community. "Play your best; be your best" – cheered Ms Mary Davis CEO SOI, addressing the audience at the Ceremony. The 'Start your impossible' Campaign by Toyota motivated the audience to set any goal and make it happen



Tanvi, (Unified Partner) and Shitu (Athlete) represented India along with two representatives from each of the participating nations during the Ceremony

Football Experience



SO Bharat (B1) played three preliminary matches against SO Mexico, SO Egypt & SO Korea from 17 – 19 July 2018. While the match with Mexico ended in a 0-0 draw, matches against Egypt and Korea brought the score to 3-0 in favour of Egypt and 4-3 with Korea in the lead. The Award Ceremony took place at 2 :30PM on 19 July 2018 felicitating team SO Bharat for its participation at the Special Olympics Unified Cup 2018 Chicago USA.

Shivani, Athlete from SO Bharat Rajasthan and Shitu , Athlete from SO Bharat Goa got an extraordinary opportunity on 20 July 2018 to play a Unified Football friendly match with the celebrities at the Toyota park which also hosted the semi-finals and the finals the same day



The Legends Match included Hidetoshi Nakata, Dikembe Mutombo, Zico, Didier Drogba and more. The SO Bharat team was invited and congratulated for its participation by the Consulate General of India, Chicago USA. They visited and enjoyed the warm hospitality of the office of Ms Neeta Bhushan who upheld the work done by the Special Olympics movement, expressing excitement over participation of a Unified Football female team from India.



Its not just Football



The experiences of the female Unified football squad that participated at the Unified Cup Chicago were extraordinary and profound since they first met with many lessons for all of us in what it truly means to be inclusive. Playing alongside Special Athletes at the first training Camp held in March 2018 was a first for most of the 5 Unified Partners. After the first day, a sceptical Unified Partner went back home telling her parents, 'We will be playing with people who are different- how would that happen'? Another said, 'I was trying to shout out to the Athlete for a pass but she couldn't hear!'. Similarly, an Athlete expressed discomfort to her Coach at the thought of having to play with 'superior' players. All this, while grappling with the language barrier as India is multilingual.

As Mr Victor R Vaz, National Sports Director said, *"The Unified layout is new to the Partners. It is not easy for them to change overnight. The process has to be gradual while encouraging them too. They have their own type of game and this format challenges them to change their perspective. It begins with understanding the Athlete"*



As the players gathered for the 4th training Camp, their growing teamwork was evident. They were coordinated, with partners and athletes communicating well. As Vanshika (Unified Partner) said, *'I have learnt patience. In fact I have learnt the sign language which helped me at a restaurant few days back!'* and Bharti speaks of learning to follow instructions of the Coach instantly. [Read More](#)

Healthy Athletes Screenings



Special Olympics Healthy Athletes Program, made possible by the Golisano Foundation in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, offered free health screenings to the Special Olympics athletes competing in the Unified Cup in three disciplines: vision (SO Opening Eyes), dentistry (SO Special



Smiles), and physical therapy/fitness (SO Funfitness)



Athlete Input Council- Revealing the Champion in all of us



The Inclusion manifesto

We are not just Athletes. We are the Ambassadors of an uprising. Peaceful protesters in a rebellion against anyone who has a fear of difference. Our demands are equality, dignity, and the recognition of our shared humanity. We will not stop or accept anything less. We are deserving. When we compete, we're fighting for a more inclusive world. We are a champion on the field and for this cause. Today, our world is more divided than ever, and coming together has never been more urgent.

The Revolution is Inclusion

An Athlete Input Council was held in Chicago USA during the Unified Cup celebrations, with Shrey Kadian (Athlete) and Harpreet Singh Gambhir (Mentor) representing SO Bharat. The Workshop was led by Ms Olga Yakimakhov, Senior Manager, Organizational Excellence, SOI. Preparing the Athletes for higher roles, sharpening communication skills etc made the flow of the workshop interactive and meaningful.



The purpose of an AIC is to have athletes (Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) who are at the center of the Special Olympics Movement, to be at the forefront of leadership, helping guide the way for the future of Special Olympics. Shrey Kadian, Athlete leader, SO Bharat is currently a member of the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Athlete Input Council



Light Up for Inclusion

With the **Hampi Uggra Narasimha Temple** lit up, SO Bharat Karnataka brought India on the map, joining over 225 major landmarks, stadia, and iconic buildings around the world that turned red as part of [Light Up for Inclusion](#), a global display of unity representing the dawn of the Inclusion Revolution [Watch Video](#)



The Eternal Flame of Hope Monument



The Law enforcement officers, athletes, and the public ran the Flame of Hope from 31st Street Beach through Soldier Field to the Eternal Flame of Hope monument on 20 July 2018. As an added surprise it was also announced that the road by Soldier Field will be renamed Special Olympics Drive.

On the morning of 10 July, in honour of Eunice Kennedy Shriver's birthday, the Flame of Hope was lit from the rays of the sun in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, where she spent her summers sailing with her sister Rosemary. This flame travelled to Chicago, where it lit the Eternal Flame of Hope on 20 July.

To mark the 50th Anniversary of Special Olympics, the Eternal Flame of Hope — a permanent, 23-foot monument honouring the birth of Special Olympics at Soldier Field in 1968 was erected. [Read More](#)

Global Day of Inclusion at Soldier Field

The Global Day of Inclusion was a family-friendly festival encouraging all people to make their cities more inclusive. Day of Inclusion events included sports activities, games, exhibits, delicious food and live entertainment. Capping off the 50th Anniversary festivities, Chance the Rapper featured the 50th Anniversary Celebration Concert also featuring Usher, Smokey Robinson, and more



SO Bharat is thankful to **Herbalife Nutrition** for supporting participation at the Unified Cup 2018 Chicago USA



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