

April 2018- Final Version

Greetings from Special Olympics Bharat

Special Athletes add a new dimension to *Khelo India*



Photo: Manipur



Photo: Pondicherry

31 States covering 150 districts of India had Athletes with Intellectual Challenges mark a place in 'Khelo India' this year. From Jan 2018 to March 2018 approx 45,200 Special Athletes participated across 10 sports namely, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Football, Judo, Kabaddi, Power lifting, Table Tennis, Volley Ball and Swimming. The sporting bonanza under the Khelo India banner will continue to cover rest of the 688 districts having presence of SO Bharat.

The scheme has positioned SO Bharat on a much wider platform for promulgating sporting abilities of persons with intellectual disabilities as against the

earlier Govt programs. Involving the local administration and the states' education, sports, social welfare and police departments was an opportunity created by the program. The North East states have emerged strong in their participation despite geographical and logistical challenges

“**Khelo India**” is the new scheme of the Government of India for the Promotion of Sports. SO Bharat has been recognized by the Government for implementation of the program for Persons with IDisability. The new Scheme ensures the convergence of Disability leading to emotional integration and creating a common platform against discrimination. In this context, sports is not just a catalyst, but is deemed a major instrument of change. The scheme facilitates first class training facilities to the Athletes, and in a special way, to the resource personnel, to ensure sustained quality growth. SO Bharat, with its experience and outreach is strategically positioned to implement “Khelo India” , a scheme that falls perfectly in conjunction with the mission and vision of Special Olympics’ promotion of ‘*Inclusion through Sports*’

An Impact Spreading Wider



After having conducted a Fitfeet screening with the SO Bharat Athletes in Kolkata, Dr Shabnam Aggarwal , Director Education Nupani Group of



Institutes, decided to conduct the same in a Mainstream school. Consequently, the shoes used by the school were changed. The result of the screening was beyond anticipation, accentuating the need to conduct such screenings universally. As we measure impact on the Athletes, the significance of the Healthy Athletes Program transcends boundaries to serve the whole community . This was an episode with not much detail nevertheless creating deep impact; something that can be treasured as a momentous achievement of the Healthy Athletes Fitfeet Program.

Fit Feet offers podiatric screenings to evaluate ankles, feet, lower extremity biomechanics, and proper shoe and sock gear to Athletes. Many athletes suffer from foot and ankle pain, or deformities that impair their performance. In fact, up to 50 percent of Special Olympics athletes experience one or more preventable or treatable foot conditions that can affect their sports participation. Often, these individuals are not wearing the most appropriate shoes and socks for their particular sport. To alleviate these problems, volunteer foot specialists work with athletes to evaluate problems of the feet, ankles and lower extremity biomechanics.

Sports is not about winning or losing- Anil Athlete leader SO Bharat Pondicherry



At a Coaches training conducted in Pondicherry in January 2018 Anil introduced 'Athlete Leadership' to the participants. During his session he was asked questions which he replied with ready wit. With clarity he differentiated between Special Olympics, Olympics and Paralympics; on being asked about his goal in life- he re-joined that each day he achieves more than before. "Sports is not about winning or losing, it is about participation; that is where its actual power lies". It is not a surprise that Anil was one of the Athletes who participated at the Athlete Leadership Workshop held in Delhi in November

2017. He can speak four languages – English, Hindi, Telegu and Tamil . Anil 20 yrs, has a twin brother, Akhil. Anil was always subject to comparison with his brother. In fact there were people who even suggested that he should be 'given away' to an orphanage, in view of his physical condition. Although distressed, his mother was strong enough not to pay heed to these mumbles. As a child he found it difficult to hold anything, he could not stand and had an awkward posture [Read More](#)

The 3rd Swimathon- Fundraising Initiative of the Youth leaders from Bangalore



TISB Bangalore, on the day of the Event with Mr Satish Pillai

Virishabh , Youth leader TISB, at the conclusion of the TISB Swimathon 2018 ; *"Interacting with athletes with Intellectual Disabilities is not an unknown activity for me. However, with every interaction, I feel like I learn something new. Today, sparking a conversation was difficult to say the least. But soon, our halting conversation turned to the perks of bilateral breathing in freestyle, and the uneasiness in the air dissipated as we focused on our shared passion – swimming. Of course, some of the other athletes were quite the*

contradiction. Their passion for their sport exhilarated us further, showing us all a new perspective to the meaning and value of sport itself. It dawned on me then, that the happiness through this interaction was infinitely more valuable to them than any monetary sum. Their contribution to our community, although unrecognized, is simply immeasurable. They truly have taught me the true meaning of 'the magic of sport'

The third edition of the TISB Swimathon, a fund raiser, was conducted at **The International School Bangalore** with participation of the students of the school and SO Bharat Bangalore Athletes. Following the triathlon layout Athletics, Swimming and Cycling were the events conducted. There is an amount pledged for every lap swam or round cycled or run and every participant attached to a few sponsors. What is unique about this event is the fact that it's totally student run - both the organizers and participants are students, with the school providing logistical support and a conducive environment for them to lead.

Football for Social Change- Collaboration with the Delhi Dynamos FC



Photo: At Frank Anthony Public School New Delhi

Mr Ashish Shah, CEO, Delhi Dynamos FC *"It's a great initiative that Special Olympics Bharat and Tottenham Hotspur Foundation have taken and we are delighted to be a part of it. At Delhi Dynamos our aim has always been to encourage athletes to take up sports. This two-day program has been very fruitful for our coaches who have had the opportunity to learn and also share their coaching experiences with the Athletes from Special Olympics"*

Mr Ashish Shah CEO, DDFC & Air Marshal (Retd) Denzil Keelor PVSM, KC, AVSM, VrC, Founder & CEO SO Bharat inked the agreement in the presence of Francisco Perez Lazaro, Head Youth Development, DDFC, Albino Gomes, Goal Keeper, DDFC and the DDFC & SO Bharat Coaches and Athletes. The momentous occasion took place at the Frank Anthony Public School New Delhi. Following the signing of the agreement and a brief orientation of the Special Olympics program and Unified Sports, two Unified teams geared up for an 11-a-side football match. While one team had the DDFC Coaches playing Unified partners, the other had the SO Bharat Coaches.

Air Marshal (Retd) Denzil Keelor PVSM, KC, AVSM, VrC: *Joining hands with the DDFC is a milestone achieved in the Inclusion Revolution that we all are a part of. It is very inspiring to have DDFC, promising a superior football experience for our Athletes and Coaches while strengthening the youth presence. I am happy to see that the 'Football for Social Change' initiative of Special Olympics and the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation has come a long way affecting enrichment of the football environment for our Athletes & Coaches*

Youth Activation Committee (YAC)-Delhi NCR



The Youth Activation Committee- Delhi NCR held its third round of discussions on 6 March 2018 at the National Office rooting the youth deeper into the Special Olympics movement in India. The meeting. The meeting was convened by Simran Sahni and Shrey Kadian, taking the members through a scrupulously planned agenda of youth initiatives to be undertaken in the next three months. An Annual Action Plan was deliberated upon and delegation of tasks took place outlining specific persons responsible for carrying out each.

The activities of the past 3 months were discussed while a plan was laid out for those to be conducted in the next three months , before the next YAC



IKEA Foundation- Lets Play for Change *Exclusive*

Jharkhand



In the past three months (January – March 2018) Jharkhand has conducted Coaches training and the young Athletes sessions across 6 districts, namely, East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Dumka & Ranchi reaching out to over 8000 Young Athletes. A key message to the family members across all sessions have been to replicate the drills at home for a regularized and meaningful engagement of the Young Athletes. The local organizations have been tapped and their representatives were extended the training to gear up for implementation of the Young Athletes program across all the three models: School, home & Community

New Delhi



Darshan Academy, a mainstream School in Delhi incorporated the Young Athletes Program in their line up for the primary wing during their Annual sports. The school has been engaging with SO Bharat for the past two years, having conducted Unified recreational sporting activities

Approx 20 Young Athletes completed drills with the assistance of the students of the school, along with also having some of them do the drills alongside. The event has motivated the school to consider adding this to the sport curriculum for the primary wing in the Unified format

SO Bharat Young Athletes [Facebook page](#)

Visit us on

www.specialolympicsbharat.org
[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [You tube](#)