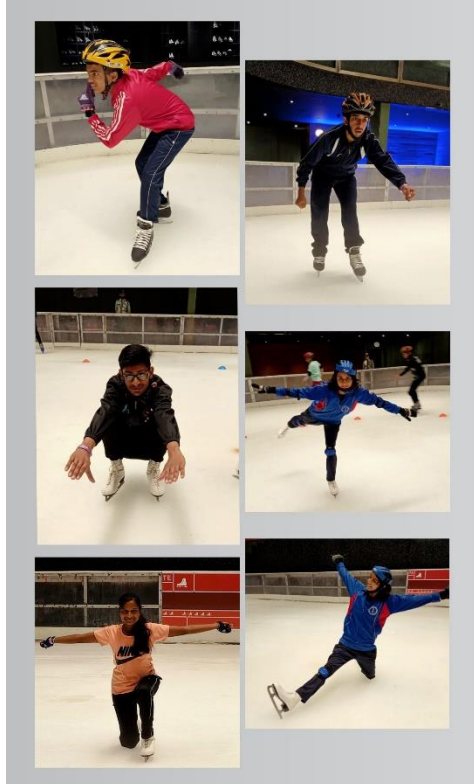


Greetings from Special Olympics Bharat

National Coaching Camp in Figure & Speed Skating held in Gurugram



17 Athletes from five states of India participated in the Figure and Speed Skating Camp held at iskate, Ambience Mall, Gurgaon, Haryana, in preparation of the **Special Olympics World Winter Games** to be held in Kazan, Russia in 2023. The National Coaching Camp supported by the Sports Authority of India, and in partnership with iskate, was held between 12 & 23 September, witnessing participation of 30 Athletes, Coaches, escorts and officials.

The Athletes were trained to enhance focus on physical fitness and technique leveraging the facilities which are not available outside the Camp. Tanshu and Rachna, the Athletes who participated at the Sweden Invitational Games held in January 2020 winning 2 Gold and 2 Silver medals, continued to focus on upgrading themselves through the added opportunities to practise

In the words of Mr Harpreet Singh, Director Sports, SO Bharat and also in-charge of preparing the contingent for the World Winter Games, *“Although the recent announcement of the postponement of the Special Olympics World Winter Games from January 2022 to January 2023 spread an amount of gloom, it failed to dampen the zeal of the Athletes. They are back in their*

practice mode and take this as an opportunity to fortify their preparedness for the global event”

Dr Mallika Nadda talks about Special Olympics in 'Mehman' , an a program on Doordarshan National



Dr Mallika Nadda, Chairperson SO Bharat quelled the curiosity of the anchor, Ms Nidhi Singh from Doordarshan , unfolding the resolve of the founder of the global movement, Ms Eunice Kennedy Shriver, to create a platform for persons with Intellectual Disability, bringing them out of isolation and institutionalisation through Sports. Further details of the movement around the world and within India highlighting the unique element of 'Divisioning' and India's participation at the Special Olympics World Games was explicated along with its epic foundation and expanse.

The story of the inception of the World Winter Games in the lives of the Athletes in India brought out the grit and determination of the Athletes , Coaches and Officials including herself, of expanding participation in sports which do not describe as 'popular' in the country. The conversation flashed backed into the first National level Winter Games Camp that was held in Himachal Pradesh with the participation of over 700 Athletes from all over India. [View More](#)

Nidhi Kumar, anchor for Lead DD (Doordarshan) NATIONAL having 42 Million viewers ,invited Dr Nadda to feature in 'Mehman' a Celebrity show. DD National is the flagship channel of Doordarshan, India's public service broadcaster, and the most widely available Television Channel in India

The Athletes venture deeper into the digital space to articulate



A few workshops, held recently, trained the Athletes to contribute their stories on the typed tales website that was launched in January 2021, by a group of youth leaders based out of Mumbai, Maharashtra. These workshops were led by a few youth leaders who prefer conducting them in small groups, as it requires personalised attention. The workshops began with activities that had the Athletes react to specific situations and imaginative questions. As the Athletes answered questions and expressed their thoughts, the depiction translated into few and simple slides. The exercise is meant to encourage more and more athletes to feel comfortable to contribute.

Typed Tales, is an e-Learning platform that facilitates socio-emotional learning for persons with and without ID through visual & short stories presented through graphic art. Saloni Mhapsekar, Kritika Sharma, and Gayatri Pore along with a team of 15+ people who belong to diverse backgrounds- engineering, animation, and storytelling, stepped in to innovate and apply their education to promote Inclusion

Separately, a workshop was held with a few Athletes to make them comfortable with Instagram, to brainstorm how to make their posts meaningful along with fun. *"I experienced Inclusion here, at Special Olympics. My experience with the special students is that of writing an exam for them. I did not really engage with them. I am, now, in the third year of Bachelors in Applied Psychology. As I volunteer with SO Bharat I am getting over biases. An effective way to do so is to engage and that is what I have realised. Athletes do not need sympathy they need acceptance. My Unified buddy and I recently realised our common interest in Punjabi music. It is as simple as this"- Tejal Dhingra, Youth leader from Delhi*

Hasbro turns attention of the Youth of Maharashtra towards practical application of Inclusive language



Hasbro has expanded opportunities for Maharashtra to reach out to schools and universities to ignite an attitude of 'Be fearless Be kind'. Since May this year it has reached out to 120 youth with and without Intellectual Disabilities, 45 schools, 450 Coaches and 55 families, besides the plan to conduct Unified sports across Roller Skating, Handball & Table Tennis. Keeping the numbers restricted in compliance with the Covid protocols, the sporting events will be held in-person, with 50 Athletes on each day.

Hamza Kachwala , Mahek Goidani, Gayatri Pore and Aparimita Singh, get closer to working with each other as they plan sessions with more youth and schools. Through several conversations they realise that they may be forming a great core team. In a recently held session Hamza, Athlete leader from Mumbai, said that, "A leader is the one who supports all". He anchored an event at his school, shortly before lockdown, substantiating his ability of communicating his thoughts with an attractive calm and a pleasant demeanour. Mahek, Youth leader, said, *"I have learnt the importance of being inclusive in language , in my course, but, there are aspects of it that surface when you apply it to people around you. Language should not be ofcourse, demeaning but also not very 'special'. Engagements with the Athletes has made me realise that they must feel equal"*

A Universal reach makes the Young Athletes Program popular in Assam



Since 2017 the Young Athletes Program has gained much in terms of popularity in Assam , primarily due its universal reach. Although designed for the Athletes between 2 and 8 yrs of age, it continues to keep athletes, beyond the envisioned age-group,engaged with equal enthusisam. In fact everyone enjoys it. The youth like to support these activities while attempting them themselves;the families replicate the model to keep the young athletes engaged meaningfully at home.

“We give a kit to a family for three months, after which it is passed on to another family. During this time the family regularises the drills at home and also, as much as possible, replicates the kit using material available at home, to maintain continuity. There is more in the pipeline, perhaps to engage the youth to create the kit through their innovative ideas.” – Dr Anjana Goswami , Area Director Assam & Board Member SO Bharat

The state has also been conducting the Special Olympics Young Athletes regularly since 2017 at the Annual Sports day organized by Karunadhara , a non-Government organisation that promotes the overall well being of persons with disability and enables the financially weak with the relevant support.

State Games at Chattisgarh

With Ms Naina Singh, Mountaineer Chattisgarh



Over 350 persons were in attendance to witness the State games held in Chattisgarh showcasing participation of 85 Athletes and 22 Coaches from 12 districts. The games featured Athletics, Bocce and Cycling. Mrs. Anila Bhediya, Minister, Women and Child Development, Social Welfare Department, Chhattisgarh presided the event that had several distinguished personalities including Ms. Naina Singh Dhakad, a renowned mountaineer who scaled Mt Everest, worlds highest peak (8848.86m) in June 2021.

SO Bharat's participation at the Sunfeast Run 2021



At 3 AM Gajendra, Rajat and Amisha, joined a group of runners led by their Area Director, a passionate sports person, Sandeep Kumar, to run for the Sunfeast India Move As One (SIMAO). They have been part of Special Olympics for over 10 years under the guidance of Sandeep who has mentored them. Excepting Gajendra the rest are long distance runners, all sharing a common passion for running and building physical endurance. Making this a regular Sunday practise has created a bond between them as they target to cover 30 kms each time, having exceeded the target many a times as well. *"They were excited to be part of the Sunfeast run this year. Special Olympics is very important for them opening friendship and fitness opportunities that makes them eager to participate in any event. They feel free as they run. I will always be there to Coach them."* - **Sandeep Kumar**

The three Athletes from Bihar participated in the run. Two hundred athletes and their families from across the country representing Special Olympics Bharat registered for India's largest citizen-led movement SIMAO. The second edition of Sunfeast India Move As One kicked off on India's 75th Independence Day. "SIMAO greatly resonates with Special Olympics Bharat," says Dr. Mallika Nadda, Chairperson of SO Bharat. "We truly believe that fitness and sports have the power to create change for the better. Our Special athletes take immense pride in doing their bit and move towards a fitter, healthier India. We are also delighted to join the movement and are looking forward to engaging with this incredible community at the Sunfeast India Move as One." [Read more](#)

Asha Jyoti creates a home away from home for the abandoned



The Asha Jyoti home for the Intellectually Challenged, nestles in a green patch in the heart of Delhi. Peacocks, and that too dancing ones, are not a rare sight here. Where the excitement escalates seeing their striking hues, the 120 residents of the home who have Intellectual disabilities often calling out to the visitors, asking them about their own family members who abandoned them years back, strikes hard too. The residents want to engage, they suppressed desire to run, dance and enjoy. Seeing a new

face, resurfaces the wish to connect with more persons beyond boundaries and barriers

A series of Healthy Athletes screenings were carried out recently at the Asha Jyoti home. There also, are a few more activities planned to create a holistic experience through, sports, fitness and youth engagement. With the lockdown and subsequent reduction of Sporting and other physical activities, aggression amongst the residents was on the rise, with no release of the pent-up energies. *"Sports is where real Inclusion is. For our residents, it is not just what Sports holds for others, it goes beyond. Along with fitness, it gives them a direction, a schedule that makes each one feel - an achiever and that instills joy and confidence in them. Many of them express a strong desire to be united with their families because they know that they are there. But, no one comes back to reclaim them. Sports and fit5 are engagements that are sure to deliver them into a happier zone"*- Dr Rachna Bhardwaj, Superintendent, Asha Jyoti

Consistent efforts planned and implemented by the authorities and officials of the home keep the residents happy, healthy and safe. When the residents smile, articulate and demonstrate a positive change, the moment creates a memory and an achievement for Dr Rachna Bhardwaj, her leadership and her team.

A Glimmer of hope with Sports in Jharkhand



A ball is a delightful sight for the children in the districts where the Herbalife Nutrition supported Developmental Sports activity is conducted in Jharkhand. They otherwise play with stones. Where they attend a Special Olympics event primarily to get food, that too in a common venue that is deprived of adequate space and light, the Jharkhand State Chapter is consistently driving developmental sports to transform lives in the communities across the districts of Sarekela Kharsawan, East Singhbhum and Bakaro. Since May 2021, the state has reached out to over 200 Athletes despite the struggle against the pandemic and unimaginable deprivation and despair. The State leaders and a few selected Coaches journey through the areas, themselves, to lead the sessions with a flickering hope of impacting lives. Despite the odds the program carries on. *“The enthusiasm of the families is evident when the ones who can access the virtual platforms participate with resolve, but sadly, there exists a large number in the state that is unable to do so due to digital inaccess and the incessant fight for survival”* – Mr Satbir Singh Sahota, Asst Area Director , SO Bharat Jharkhand & the Regional Sports Coordinator – East

Make a better place for you and for me- a musical performance by the students of Jaypee Public School Greater NOIDA



“Don't think of what steps to take to reach out to the Athletes, just take one forward. I joined SO Bharat about four years back when I was in Class 9. I wanted to volunteer during my summer break. Today I work closely with the National office to drive this program forward. This is Special Olympics”. said Mahi

Dheri, Intern for Youth Initiatives at SO Bharat, on a Panel at the third edition of Saathi, an initiative of the Jaypee Public School, Greater NOIDA. Joining her was Ms. Monika Dinesh Principal Ananth Central for learning and development Delhi, Ms. Seema Rana Head SEN Department Lotus Valley International School Noida, Ms. Uma Chopra Tagore International School Vasant Vihar Delhi, Ms. Pratibha Upadhyay JPS Gr. Noida, Ms. Prisha Gaba, Ms. Mahi Dheri & Kaira Rishi. They all expressed their thoughts

and experiences about Inclusion in education. A mesmerizing symphony produced by the students of the school kept the viewers engaged, along with various other segments of the virtual event

“Let’s Connect Saathi –a community level project had a core team of the students organize a series of one day online webinars in the months of June July and September highlighting the abilities of the children with special needs from different schools across India, witnessing the participation of more than 300 students. The three editions focused on three different themes, with Yoga and fitness in June, the Tokyo Olympics in the second while the third upheld the role of the Special Educators and the Youth in bringing about Inclusion. The leadership of the school plans to create consistent events that would highlight and encourage inclusive education and talk about equal opportunities for every child with an objective of " leaving no child behind".

PARTNERS IN INCLUSION



www.specialolympicsbharat.org | [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#),

[SO Bharat Young Athletes Facebook page](#) and [You tube](#)