

Greetings from Special Olympics Bharat

## Special Olympics Bharat conducts over 100,000 health screenings all over India, preparing the Athletes to 'Return to Play'

*As part of the Govt of India program, Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*



The message of Inclusive Health was never as forceful as it was this year in action and scale. 139 locations across 31 States and Union Territories of India celebrated the World Health Day conducting over 100,000 in dental (Special Smiles), eye care (Opening Eyes) and Health parameters (Health Promotion- prevention & nutrition) medical screenings. Prior to the event 8772 medical and sports professionals were trained, getting familiar with Intellectual Disability and the Special Olympics protocols while also gaining an experience of engaging

with Persons with intellectual Disability. Chief Ministers of several states and distinguished officials graced the event in their respective regions, engaging with the SO Bharat Athletes and encouraging the medical fraternity to embrace Inclusion while motivating the Athletes to continue to stay fit, be safe and play

The maximum screenings in any one location were held in the Karnavati University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, on 6 and 7 April 2022. Additional Director, Karnavati University, Prof. (Dr.) Rohan Bhatt activated over 1800 volunteers on ground including university students, doctors and masters' students.



The National Health Fest for Divyangjan (Persons with Intellectual Disability) rolled out two of its three components on 7 April 2022, World Health Day that included medical screenings and the Special Olympics Fit 5 Physical activity in an environment bursting with energy and fun. The third component of SO Bharat's strategy of 'Return to Play' as part of Amrit Ka Mahotsav is to launch 750 sports centers, covering nearly all the districts of the country with sporting and inclusive opportunities for the Athletes, enabling them to continue to play and develop through the medium of sports



SO Bharat entered the **Asia Book of Records** for making a record of training a maximum number of medical and sports professionals through offline and online modes. SO Bharat was also felicitated with the **World Talent Organization** award for the largest number of people with IDD (Intellectual and Developmental Disability) having participated in fitness training program in a week in multiple locations

## The Culmination of the National Health Fest at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, Gujarat



The National program culminated in a grand celebration held at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, which was graced by the Governor of the State, His Excellency Shri Acharya Devvrat and the Hon'ble Chief Minister of the State of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendra Patel. Also present on the occasion were the star Indian Wrestlers Yogeshwar Dutt and Babita Phogat.

Joining the distinguished guests on the stage were the officials from Special Olympics International, Special Olympics Bharat and Athletes from SO Bharat- Gujarat. A team from Special Olympics led by Mr Dipak Natali, PMD,

SOAP, Dr Alicia Bazzano, Chief Health Officer, SOI and Ms Annemarie Hill, Vice President- Health, SOI was present at the event. Dr Mallika Nadda, Chairperson, Special Olympics Bharat, read the message sent by the hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, especially drafted for Special Olympics Bharat. Video messages were received from many State Government leaders wishing SO Bharat their best [News here](#)

## Touching Lives – The National Health Fest

The National Health Fest held on 7 April focused on the preparedness of the Athlete to return to activities. It may amaze how the largest fest ever, and that too specifically, for Persons with Intellectual Disability, aided achievements from perspectives that may be beyond the official radar. As the days pass and the thrill of the culmination of the festival ebbs out, the profound impact of the nation-wide celebration is beginning to surface from different parts of India.

## Re-uniting a Person with Intellectual Disability with his family - *Story from Madhya Pradesh*

Anas Ashfak Khan, fondly called Laloo, 15 yrs, participated in the Guinness attempt in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, on 7 April 2022. He is a person with Downs Syndrome, a challenged speech & has a mild Intellectual disability. For registrations for the event, a few documents were required for establishing the identity of the Athletes which would position them to avail benefits of several Govt schemes for Persons with Disabilities in future. Laloo applied for his Aadhaar card. Records showed that it was already made. The perseverance of the state govt officials traced his family back to Jalgaon in Maharashtra. Laloo was re-united with his family. Through a video call, he instantly recognised and called out for his sister's husband. Following a thorough verification process, Laloo will be travelling back with his family, once all the paper work is over. Laloo was brought to the Govt facility for abandoned children with Intellectual Disability in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, in 2017 where his age was estimated to be 10 at that time.



“According to me the fest is nothing short of being WONDERFUL. Amongst all the disabilities, intellectual disability often is overlooked. This fest, in terms of scale and specification of benefitting the persons with ID, has never been heard of earlier. In my location about 3000 Athletes were screened; and all now have Aadhaar cards, Disability certificates etc. this will help them avail all the benefits in future. Aadhar card is the greatest challenge. The govt officials assign one day in a week to make it. However, for this event they worked round the clock and created a dream future for so many Children and Adults with Intellectual Disability’ – Ms Vanmala Rai, Special Educator at the facility.

## दोनों तरफ खुशी के आँसू, बिछड़ने वाले भी रोए और मिलने वाले भी

पाँच साल बाद परिजनों के साथ अपने घर के लिए लौटा लालू, तमाम औपचारिकता के बाद वही गई सुपुर्दगी



**मिशन सयसेस** जिसने भी सुना, बरा, दैतन ही रह गया

नाम संवाददाता जयसपुर

पाँच साल पहले जो किन्से जुदा हुआ आज दुनो के बीच लौट गया, लेकिन पाँच वर्ष पहले किन्के बीच आया उनसे ही जुदा हो चला। बात हो रही है उस दिवस लालू की, जो वर्ष 2017 में परिजनों से बिछड़ा और बालगृह में रहने के बाद मंगलवार को अपने परिजनों के साथ अपने घर जलराज, महाराष्ट्र खाना हुआ। मिलन और बिछोह को हम चंदी में मालिश ऐसा बना कि दोनों तरफ आँसुओं को धार बना, लेकिन नाम अज्ञात की हर एक चूँच खुशहाली की माशी बनो। 17 वर्ष के किशोर की आयुविली जैसे किन्नी आश्रय में कम नहीं। मंगलवार को बर्तनिक रूप से अकिस्मिन बालगृह पहुँचे परिजनों के साथ तमाम कानूनी प्रक्रिया पूरी की गई। इससे पहले लालू को प्रथम श्रेणी मॉडिस्ट्रेट के समक्ष पेश किया गया। बालगृह तथा प्रशासनिक अधिकारियों की ओर से पूरा ब्यौता प्रस्तुत किया गया। तब कहीं जाकर किशोर को उसके परिजनों को सुपुर्द करने के आदेश जारी किए गए।

नामकिन सा लमने वाले घटनाक्रम में कई दिनचर्या कहनु है। सरकारी योजनाओं के लाभ के लिए लालू का आधार बनने संस्था अधिकार समनेश पटेल ने ई-गवर्नेंस के मैनेजर विजयू विपारी से समझा बना। सबसे बड़ी चुनौती लालू के पास न जन्मतिथि थी और न ही कोई असल नाम। लिहाजा, बायोमेट्रिक तरीके से ई-आधार हासिल करने की दिशा में प्रयास शुरू किए गए। ई-गवर्नेंस टीम ने सिस्टम में लालू के फिंगर प्रिंट तो लिए लेकिन पहले से ही आधार बना होने के कारण सिस्टम से फिन्कोड की डिमांड आने लगी। पूरे में सई श्रुद्धिने जैसा टॉस्क लेकर एक दर्जन कर्मचारी लगाए गए। प्रदेश और बाहर के 1850 फिन्कोड ट्राई किए गए, सब कहीं जाकर महाराष्ट्र के जलगाँव का फिन्कोड काम कर गया और पूरे ब्यौते के साथ ई-आधार औपन हो गया। किन्नी तरह से मोबाइल नंबर और फिर परिजन ट्रेड किए गए। पी-3

## Hotel Lalit – the happiness partner of SO Bharat at the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav- Story from New Delhi

On April 13, 2022, Mr Keshav Suri, Executive Director at The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group celebrated his birthday with a special twist. For the first time his list of invitees included the Champions of SO Bharat – Aditi Sabrawal , Suman, Patrick Gomes, Deepak Soni & Siddhant Nath. The Lalit team also reached out across 12 units to diverse communities including people from spectrum of disabilities, acid attack survivors, LGBTQQIA+ community, orphanages, old age homes etc. including three of the centres – Amar Jyoti, Delhi, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Chandigarh & Narayan Sewa Sansthan, Udaipur to spread happiness and joy with the children at the special schools supported by Special Olympics Bharat.



The LaLiT collaborated with SO Bharat as 'Happiness Partners' at the National Health Fest, providing food to the centers across Chandigarh and Delhi. Dr Jyotsna Suri, Managing Director at Bharat Hotels Limited (New Delhi), visited the screenings held at Aanchal School, Chanakya Puri. Additionally, they positioned the SO Bharat Amrit Mahotsav standees in the Delhi hotel lobby and had the SO Bharat banner running across all their room screens for a week, in all the cities where the hotel is located

"The practice of 'giving back' and supporting the marginalized intersections of our society is deeply ingrained into The Lalit DNA. Being a part of the hospitality industry, we want to be of service to the people, especially the disprage intersections of the society. We are celebrating #AzadiKaAmritMahotsav with the mission to create opportunities and bring the neglected intersections into the fore," said **Dr Jyotsna Suri, Chairperson and Managing Director, Bharat Hotels Ltd.** (The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group).

Going forward the hotel is open to train the SO Bharat athletes in the hospitality sector and also hire them in Mumbai and Delhi, to begin with.

## Shubh's participation in the National Health Fest gets recorded in the indegenously designed SO Bharat Digital App



Shubh Patel's health parameters across the three disciplines: Special Smiles (dental), Opening Eyes (eye-care) and Health Promotion (prevention & Nutrition) are fine. In fact, his overall health being good is attributed to a regular sporting regimen. However, he has been advised to reduce TV/screen time which is about 4 hours and also to improve his diet which currently includes frequent 'cola drink' consumption. And all this data reached SO Bharat through simply scanning the QR code embedded on his I Card that was designed for the National Health Fest held on 7 April 2022. The Code which is unique to him will always provide access to his medical history, shedding off laborious and repetitive paper work.

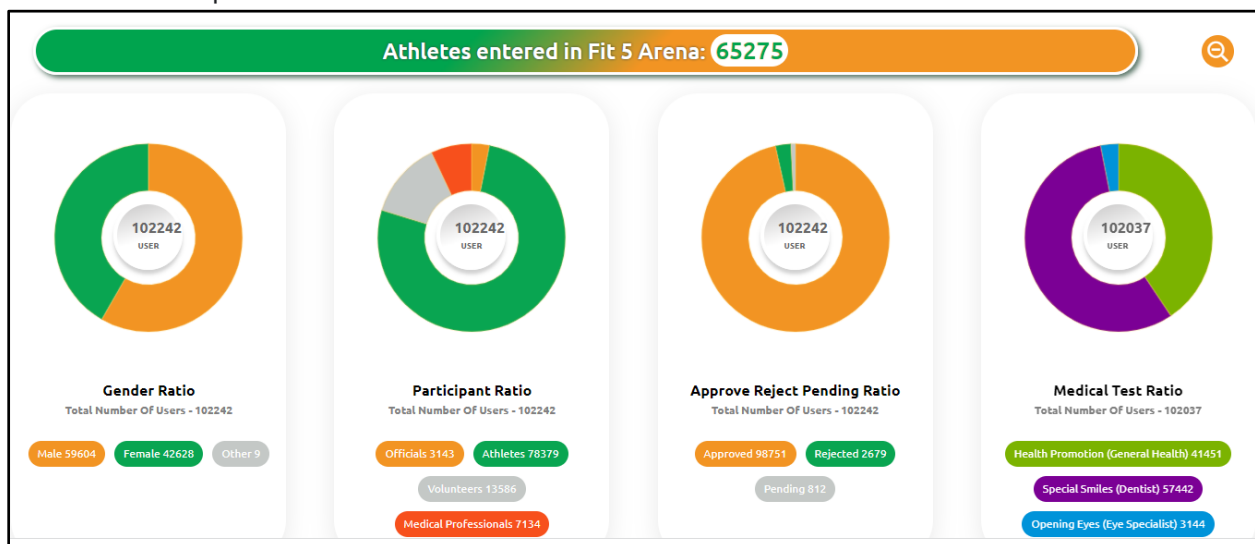
When Ashaben Natwarbai Patel lost her husband to Covid 19, last year, she turned to Shubh , her son, for consolation and support. Shubh by then had been trained to run their shop named after him – 'Shubh Electricals' located in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Shubh 24yrs now, was born without a forehead. He was born with Apert syndrome, which is a genetic disorder characterized by skeletal abnormalities. His parents, while trying to understand the unique features their son was born with, had to confront family and friends as well. One of the titles given to their son, 'demon-like' son, remains imprinted in Ashaben even today. Shubh's parents felt abandoned at that but stood by each other. No one visited the hospital to welcome the child. A few days on and his parents decided to take on the journey by

themselves at times weeping and at other, determined to win, by doing the best for their son who was unique and a blessing. They named him – Shubh meaning ‘Auspicious’. [Read his complete story here](#)

The trials and tribulations faced by his parents may be common to many others who have accepted them as part of their lives and don't even bother to mention them. People with Intellectual Disability often remain hidden and their family members continue to face associated seclusion. **Special Olympics is a global inclusion movement and since 1968 has been using sport, health, education and leadership programs every day around the world to end discrimination against and empower people with intellectual disabilities.**

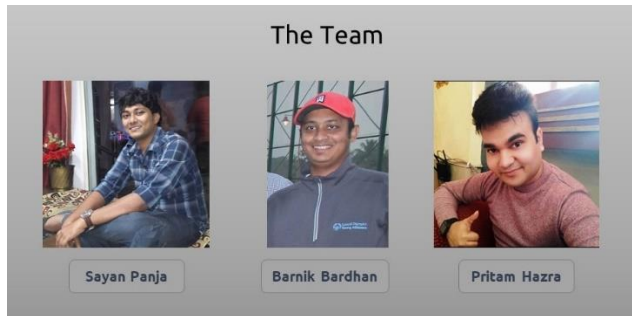
## The Vicissitudes of digitizing data and encouraging a new approach

The National Health Fest became an enormous testing ground for gauging the efficacy of the indigenously designed digital application, throwing some nail-biting challenges while also creating unprecedented moments of triumph.



Designing and making it functional was a journey worth recording. Building the application was followed by training different groups of people on how to use it. When the registrations started real time changes were incorporated to the design to ensure ease of use. *“It was a challenge to build a platform that would help us gather data and registrations for multiple athletes from one single source”-* says Barnik Bardhan, Digital Application team lead. *“Many doctors registered themselves as volunteers instead of medical professional, hence restricting their features on the app. A method of changing all those users into the correct category without them having to reapply, had to be designed. Finally, the biggest challenge came 2 days before D-Day. On the 5th when 36 centers were screening a sudden surge in usage, especially on spot registrations crashed our servers. We then had to in a span of 6 hours come up with a solution, think on our feet and shift our backend to a more powerful server. And when it ran flawlessly on the 7th it was immensely satisfying”*

Digitization of such a large-scale event was being done for the first time and the users adapted to the new system- all of this was a glorious development.



Commenting on the path ahead, Barnik, representing his team that includes Sayan and Pritam says, “We want to adapt the screening platform into a daily use feature wherein athletes can setup appointments with medical professionals and get screened outside Special Olympics events. We also want to create a wider feature to manage and run sports centers across the country where athletes can train and practice

their favorite sports. Lastly and importantly, we want this platform to become an aggregator for the unified programs of Special Olympics. We believe by doing the above actions we will be able to create a long-term impact on the lives of the Athletes”

## Creating an Inclusive Sports Culture

As part of SO Bharat’s participation in Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, 750 Sports centres would be established in the next three years. Typically a Sports Center will be fully equipped with trained sports professionals who would provide sports & fitness training to children & adults with IDD inclusively. The execution of a sports program will also be utilised to assess impact of sports on the Special Athletes, after they have utilised the platform for about two years or so



The ground work that commenced earlier this year stands at 22 districts which have been earmarked, through the CSR support of Central Coalfields and NHPC across eight states, namely, Jharkhand and Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Ladak, Sikkim, Uttrakhand, respectively. To confirm the venues that would host the Sports Centers, partnerships with various Colleges and Universities are being explored. The Centers, while they provide suitable sports infrastructure for the Athletes to continue with regular sports will also employ at least one Coach Assistant, making SO Bharat’s maiden and giant step towards generating

employment for Persons with intellectual Disability, including them as productive citizens. The planning and execution of the Sports Centers will be monitored centrally.

### PARTNERS IN INCLUSION



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