

### 3rd Khelo India National Winter Games declared open

**Hon'ble Prime Minister encourages the participating players through his message**

**Union Sports Minister lauds the J&K Government for developing sports facilities at grassroot level & achieving unprecedented progress in the sports sector in a short span of time**

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Union Minister*



**Khelo India Winter Games will celebrate & honour sporting excellence and witness the contests of skill and endurance of athletes: Lt Governor**

**It is a great occasion to strive for the greatest victory, to uphold the spirit of sportsmanship, peace, equality, friendship & respect for the competitors. The spirit of oneness, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat will make us stronger: LG**

The entire country at the moment is united by 3rd Winter Games dream. Each player participating will become best ambassador of J&K. With the spirit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', this sporting spectacle will strengthen the bond of goodwill & unite all the players as one family: LG

*I invite all our guests, who have come from every corner of the country to enjoy our hospitality, to enjoy the games and to enjoy the incredible sights and sounds of Jammu Kashmir: LG*

- Lt Governor, Union Sports Minister e-launch 40 Khelo India Centres across Jammu Kashmir
- With the help of Union Sports Ministry we will work for establishing Center of Excellence for Winter Games: LG

**Gulmarg, February 10:** The 3rd edition of Khelo India National Winter Games began at Gulmarg with the message by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to the participating players.



The mega sports event was declared open in the presence of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of J&K, Shri Manoj Sinha and Hon'ble Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports and I&B, Shri Anurag Thakur.

During the biggest winter sports tournament, more than 1500 Athletes from all over the country will compete in 11 different winter-sports disciplines.

Union Sports Minister, Shri Anurag Thakur lauded the J&K Government for developing sports facilities at grassroot level and achieving unprecedented progress in the sports sector in a short span of time.

What Jammu and Kashmir has done in the world of sports in just three years is a matter of great pride. Indoor stadiums have been built in every district and every village has a playground. Where once there used to be incidents of stone pelting, **today** football, wushu and various sports are played there. This is the picture of new Jammu Kashmir, he added.

The Union Minister assured full support and cooperation in developing Center of Excellence for Winter Games in the UT.

It is the vision of Hon'ble PM Shri Nareandra Modi ji to create sporting infrastructure across India. The setting up of a National Centre of Excellence in the valley will support the athletes of J&K, he said.

In his address, Lt Governor Shri Manoj Sinha said, Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji's message and blessings to the players participating in 3rd Khelo India National Winter Games will encourage & inspire them.

Khelo India Winter Games will celebrate & honour sporting excellence and witness the contests of skill and endurance of athletes. It is a great occasion to strive for the greatest victory, to uphold the spirit of sportsmanship, peace, equality, friendship & respect for the competitors. The spirit of oneness, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat will make us stronger, the Lt Governor said.

“The entire country at the moment is united by the 3rd Winter Games dream. Each player participating will become the best ambassador of J&K. With the spirit of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’, this sporting spectacle will strengthen the bond of goodwill & unite all the players as one family,” the Lt Governor said.



On behalf of the people of J&K, the Lt Governor welcomed the players, officials and sports enthusiasts and invited all the guests, who have come from every corner of the country to enjoy J&K's hospitality, to enjoy the games and to enjoy the incredible sights and sounds of Jammu Kashmir.

The Lt Governor also highlighted the transformation in J&K's sporting culture under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister.

In the past few years, J&K has given many sporting heroes to the country. Continuous efforts of the UT Government in developing world-class sports infrastructure and facilities in every nook & corner of UT, vibrant sports culture & sports budget at par with bigger states have added a new dimension to J&K's Sports sector, said the Lt Governor.

Welfare of sportspersons is our priority. Special efforts are being made to ensure dignified life for our sportspersons and to encourage youth to choose sports as a career. The participation of more than 50 lakh youth in various sporting events last year is a testimony to this commitment, he added.

With the help of Union Sports Ministry we will work for establishing Center of Excellence for Winter Games. The location has already been identified. All efforts



are being made to provide opportunities to sportspersons to excel in their career, the Lt Governor noted.

On the occasion, Lt Governor and Union Sports Minister e-launched 40 Khelo India Centres across Jammu Kashmir. The Centres have been dedicated to all the budding sportspersons of J&K UT.

Sh Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary, Youth Affairs & Sports J&K and Ms Nuzhat Gul, Secretary, J&K Sports Council shared the achievements of the J&K UT in national & international sports arena.

Sh Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Lt Gen Amardeep Singh Aujla, GOC, 15 Corps; representatives of various sports organizations, prominent sports personalities and sports-lovers witnessed the inaugural ceremony.