



Vinesh Phogat returns to competitive wrestling, shifts to 57kg for National Open Ranking Tournament

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29: Three-time Olympian Vinesh Phogat is set to make her return to competitive wrestling with a switch to the 57kg weight class, as she gears up for the National Open Ranking Tournament 2026 in Gonda, Uttar Pradesh, scheduled from May 10 to 12.

The national meet will mark Phogat's first competitive appearance since the Paris 2024 Olympics and will serve as a crucial step towards qualifying for the upcoming Asian Games in Japan, set to take place from September 19 to October 4, as per Olympics.com.

{The 31-year-old Indian wrestler had earlier announced her retirement a day after failing to make weight for the gold-medal bout at the Paris 2024 Olympics. However, in December last year, she reversed her retirement decision, setting her sights on the LA 2028 Olympics.

Vinesh, a member of the renowned Phogat sisters, had made it to the final of the women's 50kg event at Paris 2024, securing her spot with a series of impressive victories. She beat Tokyo 2020 champion Yui



Susaki of Japan, 2019 European Championships gold medalist Oksana Livach of Ukraine and Pan American Games winner Yusneylis Guzman of Cuba en route to the Paris 2024 final.

Vinesh has frequently switched weight categories, driven by a mix of injuries and domestic competition.

Vinesh began her career in the 48kg weight class, where she earned an Asian Games bronze in 2014 and

a silver at the Asian Championships in 2015. In the lead-up to the Rio 2016 Olympics, she fluctuated between weight divisions before ultimately competing in the 48kg category at the Games. In the following years, Vinesh competed in the 55kg and 53kg weight classes, with her most notable success coming in the latter, where she achieved significant victories on the international stage.

Vinesh claimed gold medals at both the 2018 Asian Games and Commonwealth Games in the 53kg category, where she also earned her two World Championship medals. This weight class saw her compete at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

The upcoming event in Gonda will now mark her fifth weight-category shift - and her first outing in 57kg. (ANI)

India's squad for ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 to be announced on May 2

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Wednesday revealed that the squad of the India Women's for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 will be announced on May 2.

The 2026 Women's T20 WC will see 12 teams in action in England and Wales, with the tournament commencing on June 12 in which New Zealand will be defending the crown that they won in 2024. The final will be held on July 5.

In a post on X, the BCCI said, "Mark your calendars. Team India's squad announcement for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 coming your way this Saturday."

Before the World Cup, India Women will also feature in three T20Is against England in England. They will play the series opener on May 28 and then play the second T20I on May 30 before playing the third match of the series on June 2.

In their most recent T20I assignment, the Harmanpreet Kaur-led India faced a disappointing 4-1 defeat against South Africa, led by Laura Wolvaardt.

In the fifth T20I of the series, an explosive 92 from



skipper Wolvaardt and some sensational bowling from South Africa propelled the hosts to a 23-run win over India at Benoni.

South Africa won the toss and elected to bat first. Wolvaardt put on a 75-run opening stand with Sune Luus (23 in 23 balls, with two fours and a six). But Shree Charani (2/22), Deepti (2/37), and Renuka Singh Thakur (2/21) were top class with the ball, reducing SA to 155/6 in 20 overs. During the run-chase of 156 runs, India went down to 38/3 in 7.3 overs, with Shafali Varma (4), Anushka Sharma (17) and Jemimah Rodrigues (1) falling quickly. Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (22 in 22 balls, with two fours) put on

a 38-run stand with Bharti Fulmali, taking the game in a positive direction for India. But dismissal of Bharti at score of 40 in 30 balls, with three fours and two sixes at score of 99 as the fifth wicket swung back things in SA's favour. India needed 57 runs in 27 balls.

Richa Ghosh (25* in 15 balls, with three fours and a six) delivered an important cameo, but did not find enough support, restricting India to 132/8. Nonkululeko Mlaba (2/15) and Nadine de Klerk (2/26) were the top bowlers for SA.

Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) Baramulla continues to promote a vibrant sports culture alongside its intensified anti-drug awareness drive under the banner of Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan, with a series of inter-school zonal level competitions conducted across various zones of the district.

APS Jammu Cantt Clinches U-17 Girls Title at Inter Cluster-I Football Tournament

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, APR 29

The Inter-APS Cluster-I Football Tournament for U-17 Girls, hosted by Army Public School Samba from April 27 to 29, concluded on an exciting note with spirited participation from various Army Public Schools across the cluster.

In the final match, APS Jammu Cantt defeated host APS Samba in a closely contested encounter, winning 2-1 to lift the championship trophy. Both teams displayed exceptional skill, teamwork and determination, keeping spectators engaged throughout the match.

APS Samba secured the second position after a com-



mendable performance, while APS Damana finished third, earning appreciation for their efforts.

The three-day tournament provided a vibrant platform for young footballers to showcase their talent, discipline and sports-

manship. The event was successfully organised under the guidance of the school administration, with support from the organising committee and staff.

The tournament concluded with a prize distribution ceremony, where win-

ners and participants were honoured with trophies, medals and certificates. The Principal and Chairman of APS Samba congratulated all teams for their performances and encouraged the players to continue striving for excellence in sports.

GPC Reasi organises sports activities under Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, APR 29

As a part of 100 Days Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan launched by District Administration Reasi, Government Polytechnic College Reasi today organized a series of indoor sports activities within the college premises. The event witnessed active participation of 60 students representing different departments in different indoor sports activities such as Table Tennis, Chess, and Carrom, providing students an opportunity to showcase their skills, focus, and strategic thinking.

The program was organised under the guidance of Principal, Dr. Arun Bangotra, whose encouragement motivated the participants. He observed the activities with great interest and appreciated the students for their enthusiasm and sportsmanship. While



addressing the students, Principal Dr. Bangotrasaid that sports activities serve as a positive platform for channeling the energy, improving fitness and promoting constructive habits among the students. In addition to students, faculty members also actively participated in the event.

The events were organised under the supervision of faculty members, Ms. Akankasha Sharma, Ms. Veena Thapa, Mr. Prashant Lal, Mr. Prashant Singh, and Mr. Anil Kumar, who boosted the morale of the students and created a friendly and inclusive atmosphere.

The main objective of the event was to promote a healthy and drug-free lifestyle among students by engaging them in positive and constructive activities. The initiative successfully highlighted the importance of staying physically active and mentally strong.

DYSS Baramulla amplifies Sports Movement, Nasha Mukta Campaign across Multiple Zones

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, APR 29

Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) Baramulla continues to promote a vibrant sports culture alongside its intensified anti-drug awareness drive under the banner of Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan, with a series of inter-school zonal level competitions conducted across various zones of the district.

Zone Nehalpora successfully organized an Inter-School Zonal Volleyball Competition for Under-14 boys at BMS Waripora, drawing participation from around 200 students. The event wit-



nessed great enthusiasm and showcased the budding sporting talent of the zone.

Similarly, Zone Jhulla conducted Inter-School Zonal Volleyball Competition for Under-14 and Under-17 boys under the

Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan, with participation of 60 students. The competitions aimed at channelizing youth energy into positive avenues while spreading awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

Zone Wagoora also organized an Inter-School Zonal Level Competition for Under-17 boys at HS Wattergam, where 108 students actively participated, reflecting the growing interest in sports among students.

IFL: Real Kashmir, Gokulam Kerala to face off in key relegation encounter

HYDERABAD, APRIL 29: Real Kashmir FC will take on Gokulam Kerala FC in a relegation stage of the Indian Football League 2025-26 at the Deccan Arena in Hyderabad on Thursday.

Real Kashmir enter this contest with a clear psychological edge, having secured a 6-2 victory against Gokulam in their previous meeting, as per a release. That result underlined the Snow Leopards' ability to impose themselves both structurally and in attacking phases.

Momentum, too, favours the Kashmir-based side. They closed out the league stage with a 2-0 win against a

swift Sreenidi Decca, demonstrating defensive discipline and attacking efficiency. Gokulam, in contrast, endured a difficult finish, suffering a 2-5 defeat to table-toppers Diamond Harbour FC.

Real Kashmir head coach Ishfaq Ahmad emphasised the positives from his side's recent performances, particularly highlighting discipline and defensive solidity.

"I think the last two matches have been fantastic for us. The boys did really well. A lot of credit to them because they really worked hard and got out of that bottom place. Now they have to do the same thing they have



been doing, stick to the plan and maintain discipline. Hard work and good discipline were two positives from those two matches, along with finishing with a clean sheet. Hopefully, by the grace of the Almighty, we continue in the same way," he said.

Despite these contrasting results, the table remains finely balanced. Real Kashmir sit eighth, just above Gokulam, with both sides level on eight points apiece; they are separated only by head-to-head record. With no tangible points advantage, the fixture carries significant weight in shaping the relegation battle. A win for either side could lift them to the top of the Rele-

gation Stage with 11 points, subject to other results, further underlining the importance of this encounter.

Gokulam assistant coach Ranjith CM, however, struck an optimistic note: "Real Kashmir are a very good team. We lost to them in their home match. Now, this is a neutral venue. There, we made some crucial errors during the second half, especially in the last 20 minutes. We have realised our mistakes; our players have realised our mistakes. We have watched the videos of that match. So, we won't be making those mistakes again. We are ready to fight back and get a victory against them."