



## All 6 women wrestlers selected for Asiad hail from Haryana



**NEW DELHI, MAY 30:** Wrestler Vinesh Phogat's bid to return to the international arena was halted by one of her own constituents, Meenakshi Goyat, who defeated her in the semifinals of the trials for the Asian Games. Meenakshi hails from Chabri village, which falls under the Julana Assembly segment. Vinesh is the Congress MLA from the same Assembly constituency.

However, all six wrestlers selected in different weight categories of women's wrestling for the Asian Games are from Haryana. Struggling on various

fronts and entering the trials following court directions to the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), Vinesh kicked off her campaign in style by winning two bouts to reach the semi-final stage. However, she wrestled against Meenakshi in the semifinal and lost 4-6. Meenakshi, too, lost to Antim Panghal in the final. Antim Panghal is a resident of Bhagana village in Hisar district.

Meenakshi, a resident of Chabri village, is presently living in Sonipat, though her parental home and agricultural land are in the village. Former village sarpanch Kr-

ishan Goyat said they were proud of their daughter for defeating their own MLA in the wrestling arena.

"She is an emerging player who belongs to an ordinary farming family. Her father, Prem Singh, is a farmer who frequently visits the village. They are also registered as voters in the village, which is part of the Julana Assembly segment," Krishan told The Tribune.

He said the villagers had recently honoured Meenakshi after she won a silver medal at the Senior Asian Wrestling Championship held in Kyrgyzstan last month.

However, Meenakshi later lost to Antim in the final, and Antim has now been selected to represent India at the Asian Games.

Antim's father, Ram Niwas, said she was well prepared to face any opponent in the trials.

"We were expecting a bout with Vinesh. But she lost in the semifinals," he said, adding that Antim has been in good form and expressing hope that she would improve her performance at the Asian Games, having won a bronze medal in Hangzhou.

Apart from Antim (53 kg), the other selected wrestlers are Dipanshee (50 kg), Manisha Bhanwala (57 kg), Mansi Ahlawat (62 kg), Nisha Dahiya (68 kg) and Priya Malik (76 kg).

Tejpal Dalal, a wrestling historian, said it was a good showing by Vinesh, but she needed to improve further. He noted that she had also admitted this after her loss to Meenakshi.

"I hope she comes back stronger," he said.

Dalal added that women's wrestling continues to be dominated by Haryana wrestlers, as all six selected wrestlers are from the state. He further pointed out that most of the participants in the trials also hailed from Haryana.

## J&K Police crowned Champions as IIT hosts inaugural Elite Master's Cup 2026



**HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, MAY 30**

The inaugural edition of the Elite Master's Cup (EMC) 2026, a prestigious Professional Badminton Team Championship, concluded on a high note at the Chinara Indoor Sports Complex, IIT Jammu, after three days of intense competition, sporting excellence and professional camaraderie.

The championship brought together teams representing several prominent organizations and departments, creating a unique platform for professionals from diverse fields to showcase their sporting talent while promoting fitness and healthy competition. Teams from the Indian Army, Border Security Force (BSF), Media, Bar Association, Jammu and Kashmir Police, Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD), Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS), and IIT Jammu Faculty & Staff participated enthusiastically in the tournament.

The three-day event witnessed thrilling encounters, closely fought matches and

outstanding performances as participants demonstrated remarkable skill, determination and sportsmanship.

The championship not only highlighted the growing popularity of badminton among professionals but also underscored the importance of sports as a medium for fostering teamwork, discipline and mutual respect.

After a series of exciting contests, the Jammu and Kashmir Police team emerged as the Champions of the inaugural edition, displaying exceptional consistency and teamwork throughout the tournament. The Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD) put up a spirited performance to finish as the Runners-up. The Katu Satya Media Team and IIT Jammu Faculty & Staff secured places among the tournament's semi-finalists, earning appreciation for their commendable performances.

The closing ceremony was marked by the presentation of trophies and awards to the winning teams and outstanding performers. The Champion Team Trophy

was presented by Dr. Sartaj Ul Hasan, Dean Academic Affairs, IIT Jammu, while the Runner-up Trophy was handed over by Dr. Nitin Joshi. Individual medals were also awarded to players who delivered exceptional performances during the championship.

Speaking on the occasion, the organizers highlighted that the Elite Master's Cup was conceived as a platform to strengthen bonds among professionals from different sectors through sports while encouraging a culture of fitness and wellness. The championship aligns with the objectives of the Fit India Movement, which emphasizes active lifestyles and the promotion of physical and mental well-being.

The event was organized under the guidance of Prof. Manoj Singh Gaur, Director, IIT Jammu, whose vision and support played a key role in the successful conduct of the championship. The closing ceremony was attended by several distinguished dignitaries, including Dr. Anup Shukla, Dean Students Affairs; Dr. Shiva S,

Assistant Director Sports; Dr. Deepak Yadav; Dr. Abhishek Kumar, Faculty In-Charge Sports; Dr. Pankaj Chauhan; Dr. Arvind Kumar; Col. P.S. Rathore; Dr. R.P. Prajapat, Assistant Registrar (Students Affairs); and Sh. Raj Srivastava, Sports Incharge, among others.

IIT Jammu extended its gratitude to all participating teams, officials, technical staff, volunteers and members of the organizing committee for their contribution to the success of the championship. The institute expressed confidence that the Elite Master's Cup would evolve into a flagship sporting event in the coming years, fostering greater participation, professional networking and a vibrant sporting culture across the region. The successful conclusion of the inaugural Elite Master's Cup 2026 marks an important step in strengthening sports engagement among professionals and reaffirming the role of educational institutions in promoting fitness, teamwork and community building through sporting initiatives.

## Vinesh Phogat's return to mat ends in dramatic confrontation between supporters, WFI officials



**NEW DELHI, MAY 30:** The tension was palpable, the emotions overflowing and the unusually heavy security personnel deployment was seen as all eyes remained fixed on one mat where a defiant Vinesh Phogat made her competitive return on Saturday after the heartbreak of the Paris Olympics in 2024.

For the first time since her disqualification from the Olympic final in Paris, Vinesh stepped onto the mat at the Asian Games selection trials, seeking a path back into the national team.

What followed was an emotional and dramatic spectacle that almost got to an ugly confrontation between Vinesh's supporters and Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) officials.

Every point won by Vi-

nesh drew loud cheers from a sizeable group of supporters packed around the mat. Every decision that went against her was greeted with protests.

The atmosphere reached fever pitch during her 53kg quarterfinal bout against the aggressive Nishu Kumari. At one stage, Vinesh's camp believed she had secured a pinfall victory. Her husband Sombir Rathie rushed onto the mat, arguing with mat referee, reflecting the raw emotions surrounding her comeback.

When the victory in that fiercely-fought bout was eventually confirmed, some of Vinesh's supporters broke into celebrations, dancing and cheering in front of WFI officials.

The situation became tense enough for WFI presi-

dent Sanjay Singh to leave his seat and personally intervene, urging supporters to calm down and maintain order. Police personnel were also summoned inside the venue to prevent confrontation.

Heavy security deployment had been visible outside the stadium since morning. Besides the sensitivity surrounding Vinesh's return after months of legal and administrative battles with the federation, authorities were also mindful of her status as a sitting MLA from Haryana, necessitating additional security arrangements.

The trials were being conducted under extraordinary circumstances. The Supreme Court allowed Vinesh to participate, ending months of uncertainty over

her comeback attempt.

For many present at the venue, however, the competition often appeared secondary to the story unfolding around the wrestler herself.

Every move she made drew attention. Spectators craned their necks out for a better view, supporters chanted encouragement and officials remained alert amid the charged atmosphere.

Nearly 16 months after the most painful moment of her career in Paris, Vinesh's return ensured that the Asian Games trials became much more than a routine selection exercise.

When she lost the semifinal to Meenakshi Goyat, she left the mat saying, "I will come back." WFI President Sanjay Singh claimed that it was directed at him.

"She used very rough language against me. I can't tell you exactly. She said to me, 'I will see you, and I will come back. WFI had given her a show-cause notice for indiscipline, and she remains indiscipline."

"Also we had requested all coaches that they do not bring many supporters to keep things under control, and we wonder how so many Vinesh supporters turned up. It is clear Vinesh brought a whole army of supporters. You saw how the situation almost led to confrontation multiple times. If WFI officials had not remained restrained, we could have seen a much worse situation.

## Asian Games: No Suryakumar or Shubman in BCCI's longlist; Sooryavanshi among 30 probables

**NEW DELHI, MAY 30:** India's current T20 skipper Suryakumar Yadav, along with Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill, are the two prominent names missing, while teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has been inducted into the 30-strong longlist of men's probables that the BCCI has submitted to the IOA for the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya from September 19 to October 4.

It has been pre-decided that the BCCI will need to select two separate T20 teams as India's home white-ball series against the West Indies overlaps partly with the quadrennial extravaganza.

The West Indies series comprises eight white-ball games -- three ODIs and five T20Is -- between September 27 to October 17. Since Gill is expected to lead the team in ODIs, he hasn't been picked for the Asian Games.

While some players are common in both ODIs and T20Is, men's cricket event at the Asian Games will take place between September



24 to October 3, forcing the selectors to create a bigger pool to pick two teams.

It is understood that Suryakumar is no longer in the larger scheme of things as far as 2028 Olympic Games and the next T20 World Cup is concerned and his name not featuring in the Asian Games longlist is a no-brainer.

The captaincy candidates in that Asian Games list would be Shreyas Iyer, Sanju Samson and Tilak Varma.

The list of bowlers has Jasprit Bumrah's name in it although ODIs could be his priority at that point in time

taking the 2027 World Cup into account.

Harshit Rana is expected to be fit by then and has been kept in the long-list along with Prasad Krishna and Arshdeep Singh.

Among spinners, the frontline slow bowlers Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar and Harsh Dubey have made it to the list, but only two of the four are expected to be picked. The other two will play the Windies series.

Surprisingly, the only prominent non-performer to make the list is gold medal-winning skipper from the Hangzhou edition -

- Ruturaj Gaikwad.

Longlist to IOA: Yashasvi Jaiswal, Abhishek Sharma, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Ishan Kishan, Sanju Samson (wk), Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (wk), Hardik Pandya, Rinku Singh, Tilak Varma, Jasprit Bumrah, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Prasad Krishna, Varun Chakravarthy, Anukul Roy, Ayush Badoni, Harsh Dubey, Dhruv Jurel, Khaleel Ahmed, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ravi Bishnoi, Shahbaz Ahmed, Shivam Dube, Vipraj Nigam Nigam, Harshit Rana, Yash Thakur, Washington Sundar.

## India B wins IDCA T20 Champions Trophy for Deaf 2026

**NEW DELHI, MAY 30:** The Indian Deaf Cricket Association (IDCA), supported by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and recognized by the Deaf International Cricket Council (DICC) and Asian Deaf Cricket Association (ADCA), concluded the inaugural season of the T20 Champions Trophy for Deaf 2026 on Friday, with the India B team crowned

as champions.

The event, which was held at Delhi's Bharat Nagar Cricket Ground in Ashok Vihar, saw the India B Team set a target of 139/10 for India D in 20 overs. The India D team gave a tough fight to the India B team but lost by 32 runs and ended their innings at 107/8 in 20 overs, as per a press release.

The tournament also served as a selection platform for the Indian Deaf Team, which will represent India in the Deaf-ICC ODI Men's World Cup scheduled to be held in the UAE from October 2026.

The week-long championship was hosted by the Deaf Cricket Society, Delhi (DCS), to bring together some of India's most talented hear-

ing-impaired cricketers from across the country.

Runner - up: India - D,  
Player of the Match - Final: Kuldeep Singh - India - B  
Best Batsman of the Series: Sudarsun E - India - C  
Best Bowler of the Series: Virender Singh -

India - B

Player of the Series: Suhail Ahmed - India - D  
Speaking about the championship, Sumit Jain, President of IDCA, said IDCA T20 Champions Trophy for the Deaf is not just a tournament, it is a movement that celebrates the spirit, resilience, and talent of our hearing-impaired athletes.