



## Sports quota recruitment a historic step towards empowering youth: Satish

223 sportspersons selected for government jobs; appointment orders to be handed over by CM

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In a major boost to the sporting fraternity of Jammu and Kashmir and a significant step towards creating sustainable career opportunities for the athletes, Minister for Youth Services & Sports, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today congratulated the 223 outstanding sportspersons who have been selected for appointment to government services under the sports quota.

Terming the recruitment as a landmark achievement in the government's efforts to promote sports and youth empowerment, the Minister said that the selection of such a large number of athletes reflects the administration's commitment towards excellence and ensuring that talented sportspersons are provided meaningful opportunities beyond the playing arena.

The Minister expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Chief Minister for his unwavering support and keen interest in strengthening the sports ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir. He informed that the appointment orders would be formally handed over to the selected candidates by the Chief Minister at a special ceremony,

marking a proud and memorable occasion for the athletes and their families.

Satish Sharma said that the government under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has adopted a comprehensive approach towards sports development, focusing not only on infrastructure creation and competitive excellence but also on ensuring social and economic security for athletes who dedicate years of hard work and perseverance to bring laurels to Jammu and Kashmir.

"The selection of 223 sportspersons for government employment is not merely a recruitment process; it is a recognition of the discipline, commitment, sacrifices and achievements of our young athletes. It sends a strong message that excellence in sports will be respected, rewarded and supported by the government," the Minister said.

He observed that sports have emerged as a powerful vehicle for youth engagement, character-building, leadership development and social transformation. He added that by creating assured career pathways for athletes, the government is encouraging young people to pursue sports with greater confidence and commitment.

The Minister highlighted various initiatives being undertaken to strengthen the sports landscape across the Union Territory, including

the upgradation of sports infrastructure, development of modern training facilities, organization of competitive events at district and state level, promotion of grassroots talent identification programmes and enhanced support for athletes participating in national and international competitions.

He said that Jammu and Kashmir has consistently produced talented sportspersons who have excelled in diverse disciplines and brought recognition to the region at national and international forums. The government, he added, is determined to create an enabling environment where such talent can flourish through sustained institutional support, professional coaching, scientific training methods and improved access to opportunities.

Satish Sharma said that the sports quota recruitment fulfils a long-standing aspiration of many athletes who have dedicated themselves to excellence despite numerous challenges. He said the initiative will not only provide financial stability and career security to the selected candidates but will also inspire thousands of aspiring sportspersons across Jammu and Kashmir to take up sports as a serious and rewarding pursuit.

The Minister called upon the educational institutions, sports associations, coaches and parents to work collectively towards nurturing

sporting talent and creating a culture of excellence. He emphasized that the future of Jammu and Kashmir's sporting success lies in strengthening grassroots participation and ensuring that every talented youth receives adequate opportunities to showcase their potential.

Reiterating the government's vision of making Jammu and Kashmir a hub of sporting excellence, Satish Sharma said that sports are no longer confined to recreation but have evolved into a dynamic sector offering opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, international exposure and social mobility.

"The success of these 223 sportspersons belongs not only to them and their families but to the entire sporting community of Jammu and Kashmir. Their achievements will inspire a new generation of athletes to dream bigger, work harder and contribute to the progress and prestige of the Jammu and Kashmir," he said. The Minister extended his warm congratulations to all the selected candidates and wished them success in their future careers. He expressed confidence that they would continue to uphold the spirit of sportsmanship and serve as role models for the youth while contributing meaningfully to public service and the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

## 'Sports play transformative role in combating drug abuse among youth'

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10:

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today emphasized the vital role of sports and physical activities in steering young people away from the menace of drug abuse and towards a healthier, disciplined and productive future.

The Minister was speaking at an awareness programme organized at International Delhi Public School (IDPS), Srinagar, under the theme "Say Yes to Sports, No to Drugs". The event was aimed at sensitizing the students and youth about the harmful consequences of substance abuse and promoting sports as a powerful tool for character building, fitness and social empowerment.

The programme was organized under the aegis of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan, a nationwide initiative aimed at creating awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse and mobilizing communities, educational institutions and youth towards building a drug-free society. The event brought together students, educators, policy-makers and sports administrators to reinforce the message that sports and healthy lifestyles are among the most effective tools in preventing drug abuse among young people.

Addressing the gathering, Satish Sharma lauded the initiative taken by the school administration and highlighted that sports not only contribute to physical fitness but also instill discipline, determination, teamwork and resilience among young people. He observed that engaging youth in constructive activities such as sports is one of the most effective ways to counter the growing challenge of drug addiction.

Satish Sharma said that the objectives of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan can only be achieved through sustained public participation, awareness generation



and positive youth engagement. He stressed that sports provide an ideal platform for channelizing the energy of young people towards constructive pursuits and away from the dangers of drug addiction.

The Minister said that the Government is committed to creating a vibrant sporting ecosystem across Jammu and Kashmir by strengthening sports infrastructure, expanding opportunities for participation and nurturing sporting talent from the grassroots level. He stressed that every educational institution has a crucial role to play in shaping responsible citizens and fostering awareness against social evils such as drug abuse.

"Drug addiction poses a serious threat to society, particularly to our younger generation. We must collectively work to create awareness, provide guidance and encourage healthy lifestyles. Sports offer a positive direction, helping youth channel their energy towards achievement, excellence and nation-building," the Minister said.

Satish Sharma urged students to become ambassadors of the anti-drug cam-

aign and inspire their peers to adopt healthy habits. He called for a sustained and collaborative approach involving schools, parents, civil society organizations and government agencies to effectively tackle the issue.

The programme was also attended by MLA Hazratbal Salman Sagar, who underscored the urgent need for effective and coordinated measures to curb the growing menace of drug abuse. He emphasized that awareness campaigns, community participation and proactive engagement of youth are essential to protect future generations from the harmful effects of narcotics and substance abuse.

Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, spoke about the various initiatives being undertaken by the department to promote sports and youth engagement across Jammu and Kashmir. He highlighted that sports have emerged as a powerful platform for empowering youth, fostering leadership qualities and building a drug-free society. He also stressed the importance of integrating awareness programmes with

sports activities to maximize outreach and impact.

Secretary, J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul, highlighted the efforts of the Sports Council in expanding sporting opportunities and encouraging greater participation of youth, particularly at the grassroots level. She emphasized that sports can serve as a catalyst for positive social change and play a significant role in keeping young people away from harmful influences.

Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir, Qazi Irfan, also addressed the gathering and called upon students to make informed life choices, stay away from drugs and contribute towards building a healthy and progressive society.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from Members of Chamber of Industries represented by their President Tariq Bedaba, Chairman IDPS Shoukat Choudhary, Babur Choudhary, students, teachers, sports enthusiasts and members of civil society. Various awareness materials and presentations highlighting the ill effects of drug abuse and the benefits of sports were showcased during the programme.

## Richa Ghosh's fighting knock goes in vain as England Women edge India by 5 runs in T20 WC warm-up match

CARDIFF [UK], JUNE

10: A lone-warrior knock from wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh went in vain as England Women pulled off a thrilling five-run victory over India in their final warm-up match of the Women's T20 World Cup 2026 in Cardiff here on Wednesday.

Amy Jones' 64-run knock and Nat Sciver-Brunt's 45-ball 57, along with Danielle Gibson's unbeaten 12-ball 30, guided England to 171/6 in 20 overs. On the other hand, Linsey Smith's three-wicket haul, along with Charlotte Dean, Tilly Corteen-Coleman and Danielle Gibson's two wickets each, restricted India to 166/10 in 19.5 overs despite Richa Ghosh's valiant 36-ball 68.

Chasing a daunting target of 172, India looked dead and buried before Ghosh launched a blistering counter-attack, smashing 68 off just 36 balls. However, her dismissal in the tense final over, saw India bowled out for 166 with one ball to spare.

India's pursuit of 172 got off to a disastrous start. The prominent opening duo of Smriti Mandhana (1) and Shafali Verma (13) failed to fire, leaving India at 18/2 in 2.4 overs.

When skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (17) fell cheaply trying to force the pace against England's disciplined spin attack, India's chase seemed to lose its spine. Wickets continued to tumble at regular intervals, and at 120/6 in 16 overs, the target looked well out of In-



dia's reach.

Refusing to throw in the towel, Richa Ghosh launched her counter-attack. The young wicket-keeper turned the match on its head, hitting nine fours and two sixes.

While India lost wickets of Shreyanka Patil and Kranti Gaud in the 18th over, Richa and Shree Chaurani helped India take 21 runs off the penultimate over, as the equation came down to a manageable 17 runs off the final over.

Ghosh immediately put the pressure back on Linsey Smith, who bowled the final over, dispatching the second delivery for a boundary and launching the third ball of the over beyond the ropes for a six. With India needing just 6 runs off the remaining 4 balls, momen-

tum had completely swung in the chasing side's favour.

However, the drama peaked on the fourth ball of the over. Advancing down the track to finish the game, Ghosh was deceived by Smith's flight and turn, allowing stand-in keeper Alice Capsey to take the bails off. Ghosh's magnificent 36-ball 68 came to a disappointing end.

India's last batter to come out, Renuka Singh Thakur, was cleaned up on the next ball, wrapping up the Indian innings for 166 in 19.5 overs, as England clinched the match by five runs.

Earlier in the match, India won the toss and elected to field first. England's innings was anchored by an excellent 70-run partnership between captain Nat Sciver-Brunt and Amy

Jones.

After losing early wickets, Sciver-Brunt (57 off 45 balls) and Jones (64 off 45 deliveries) rebuilt the innings with clinical precision. A late-innings cameo from Dani Gibson, who blasted an unbeaten 30 off just 12 balls, provided the final flourish to propel England to a robust 171/6 in their 20 overs.

For India, off-spinner Shreyanka Patil was the pick of the bowlers, finishing with impressive figures of 2/29.

Despite the narrow defeat, India will take confidence from their lower-order fighting spirit, as they prepare for their highly anticipated T20 World Cup 2026 opener against arch-rivals Pakistan on Sunday at Edgbaston. (ANI)

## PV Sindhu, Tanvi Sharma storm into second round of Australian Open

SYDNEY, JUNE 10:

Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu and rising Indian shuttler Tanvi Sharma advanced to the second round of the women's singles competition at the Australian Open Badminton Championships 2026 in Sydney on Wednesday.

World No. 10 Sindhu needed just 32 minutes to dispatch Ines Castillo of Peru 21-13, 21-11 in her opening-round match at the BWF Super 500 event, as per Olympics.com.

The Indian star will next face compatriot Isharani Baruah in the pre-quarter-finals. Ranked 39th in the world, Isharani secured her place in the second round after battling past China's Han Qianxi 22-20, 10-21, 21-14 in a hard-fought three-game encounter.

It will be the first head-to-head meeting between the two Indian badminton players.

Tanvi Sharma, who clinched a silver medal at last year's BWF World Junior Championships,



showed encouraging signs of a return to form with a 21-12, 22-20 victory over world No. 11 Chiu Pin-Chian of Chinese Taipei.

The World No. 36, who broke into the top 50 from outside the top 100 last year

following a string of strong performances, has struggled for consistency this season, progressing beyond the first round only twice in eight BWF tournaments so far.

In the second round on

Thursday, Tanvi will face compatriot Malvika Bansod, who defeated Thailand's Tonrug Saeheng 15-21, 21-7, 21-13 to book her place in the last 16.

Meanwhile, India's challenge in the men's singles ended in the first round following defeats for Kiran George, Saneeth Dayanand and Tharun Manneppalli.

Australian Badminton Open 2026: India squad: Men's singles: HS Prannoy, Ayush Shetty, Kiran George, Tharun Manneppalli, Saneeth Dayanand (Q), Manraj Singh (Q)

Men's doubles: MR Arjun-Hariharan Am-sakarunan, Achutaditya Rao Doddavarapu-Arjun Reddy Pochana.

Women's singles: PV Sindhu, Tanvi Sharma, Malvika Bansod, Isharani Baruah, Anmol Kharb, Aakarshi Kashyap, Tanya Hemnath, Imad Farooqui Samiya (Q) Mixed doubles: Dhruv Kapila-Tanisha Crasto, Dhruv Rawat-Manisha Keer, Mohit Jaglan-Lakshita Jaglan. (ANI)