



Asian Games: Indian women cricketers reach semis, teqball pair qualify for bronze medal match

NAGOYA [JAPAN], SEPTEMBER 18: India's women's cricket team stormed into the semifinals of the Asian Games 2026 with an eight-wicket win over Japan, while the teqball mixed doubles pair of Quimcy Joaquim Dsouza and Mohamed Anas Imran Beg secured a place in the bronze medal match on a day of mixed fortunes for the Indian contingent on Friday.

Although the official opening ceremony of the continental multi-sport event is scheduled for Saturday, Indian athletes were already in action across disciplines in Aichi-Nagoya.

India's women produced a dominant display in the cricket quarterfinal at Nishin, bowling Japan out for 57 in 19.5 overs before racing to 59/2 in just five overs to seal victory with 90 balls to spare.

After opting to bowl, India's attack kept Japan in check throughout the innings, taking wickets at regular intervals. Ayaka Kato-Stafford was Japan's top scorer with 25 off 47 deliveries, but she received little support as the hosts were dismissed for a modest total.

Sree Charani led the bowling effort with four wickets, while Shafali



Verma claimed two. Shreyanka Patil and Deepti Sharma also picked up a wicket each.

India's chase was led by an explosive innings from Shafali, who remained unbeaten on 40 off 15 balls, hitting four boundaries. Gunalan Kamalini was dismissed for a duck and Bharti Fulmali made six, but Richa Ghosh joined Shafali and struck an unbeaten 12 off six deliveries to take India to the target.

Shafali finished the match in style, launching Shimako Kato over long-on for a six with one run required.

The win booked India's place in Sunday's semifinals, where they will face Bangladesh. Pakistan will take on Sri Lanka in the other semifinal.

In teqball, Dsouza and

Beg bounced back from their quarterfinal defeat to Vietnam by beating the Philippines' Abulencia Jhoana and Agustin Prince 2-0 in the mixed doubles repechage.

The Indian pair won the first set 12-3 and followed it up with a 12-6 victory in the second to secure their place in Sunday's bronze medal match.

Their route to the repechage had included a loss to Vietnam's Gian Nghi Trinh and Hoang Minh Tan Nguyen in the quarterfinals. The Indian duo went down 7-12 in the opening set and 10-12 in the second, ending their hopes of progressing to the gold and silver medal matches.

Dsouza and Beg had advanced from Group A after finishing with two wins and two defeats in four matches.

They began with a 2-0 win over the Philippines, before losing 1-2 to Cambodia's Bun Thuonvireak and Yorn Sophornraksmey, and 0-2 to Thailand's Dejaroen Phakpong and Wongkhamchan Suphawadi.

With qualification on the line in their final group fixture, they defeated Kuwait's Alebraheem Salman and Alfaiakawi Hessah 2-0, winning the sets 12-1 and 12-6 to secure a place in the knockout stage.

Dsouza will also compete in the women's singles event. She topped Group A after registering wins over opponents from Japan and Cambodia and is scheduled to face Indonesia's Sumaya in the semifinals on Saturday.

Meanwhile, India's men's soft tennis team bowed out of the competition after a 0-2 defeat to Indonesia in the quarterfinals.

Jay Meena and Yogesh Choudhary lost 2-5 to Tio Hutaeruk and Fernando Sanger in the opening doubles tie, leaving India needing a win in singles to stay in contention.

Aryan Thakur fought hard against Bagus Pradewa but was edged 3-4, as Indonesia sealed the tie and advanced to the semifinals.

District Jammu lifts Division-level Taekwondo championship trophy

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, SEP 18

District Jammu stamped its authority on the mat, emerging as the Overall Champion in the Inter-District Division-Level Boys' All Age Groups Taekwondo Competition 2026, organised by District Youth Services & Sports department here at the Indoor Stadium. Delivering a commanding medal-winning performance across age categories, the Jammu contingent secured an impressive 23 medals—12 Gold, 5 Silver and 6 Bronze, earning the coveted Overall Championship Trophy at the divisional-level championship.

The championship brought together promising Taekwondo athletes from districts across the Jammu Division, turning the Indoor Stadium Doda



into a vibrant arena of high-energy sporting action. The young athletes showcased technical precision, agility, discipline, determination and competitive spirit, producing closely contested bouts throughout the competition. The performance of

District Jammu reflected the growing competitive depth and talent in Taekwondo across the division, while the championship provided participating athletes with valuable exposure to higher-level competition.

The successful conduct of

the championship was supported by the coordinated efforts of technical officials, coaches, managers, field staff and supporting personnel, who worked together to maintain a disciplined, professional and athlete-friendly competitive environment.

Kathua Football League enters Semi-Final stage

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, SEP 18

The ongoing Kathua Football League 2026, organised by the District Administration Kathua under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, witnessed an exciting encounter today at the Sports Ground GDC Kathua, with Sunday FC defeating Kick Off Juniors 2-0.

Sunday FC dominated proceedings and displayed a composed performance to register a comfortable victory. Amit Malhotra and Sushant scored one goal each for Sunday FC to seal the win and book their place in the next stage of the competition.

With the completion of the league-stage fixtures, Kick Off Seniors, Sunday FC, Hiranagar FC and Flote FC have secured their places in the semifinals.

The Kathua Football League is providing a vibrant platform for local youth to showcase their sporting talent while promoting discipline, fitness, teamwork and a healthy, drug-free lifestyle under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan.



Japan feel India's spin as Charani and Shafali seal semifinal spot

NISHHIN (JAPAN), SEP 18: Opener Shafali Verma's all-round brilliance and left-arm spinner Shree Charani's devastating spell powered defending gold-medallists India into the Asian Games women's cricket semifinals with a dominant eight-wicket win over an inexperienced Japan, here on Friday.

Charani (4/10) and Shafali (2/13) shared six wickets among them as India bowled out Japan for a paltry 57, and then chased down the target in just five overs to set up a clash with Bangladesh on September 20.

Shafali (40 not out, 15 balls) played the lead role in that pygmy-sized chase, along with Richa Ghosh (12, six balls).

However, Japan also had some moments to cheer as they managed to dismiss opener Gunalan Kamalini and one down batter Bharti Fulmali.

The ensuing celebrations proved Japan's spirit despite



defending an abysmally low target. But spirit alone could not help them thwart players in the class of Shafali and Ghosh, who took India home without much fuss.

The credit for restricting Japan to just-above 50 went largely to Indian spinners led by Charani.

Bowling by choice, Indians never gave the Japan batters any chance to free

their arms, which was reflected in just three boundaries in the host team's innings.

Japanese batters, who barely got to play top teams and for that matter even train regularly, could not find a way to force the pace throughout the innings.

In fact, they were even struggling to smack the ball past or over the ropes.

The Power Play yielded only 24 runs and the segment saw Japan batters hitting just two fours, and one of them was an edge through the slips.

But left-arm spinner Charani, who recorded her best figures in T20s, soon bagged the wickets of opener Haruna Iwasaki (10) and skipper Mai Yanagida off successive balls in the seventh over, continuing her recent red-hot form in this format.

In the back 10, spinner Shafali Verma (2/13) joined the list of wicket-takers as Japan slid further.

The off-spinner jettisoned Ayaka Kato-Stafford, the highest scorer for Japan with 25, and Shimako Kato in the 15th and 17th over as their attempt to go for big, aerial shots ended in the hands of Indian fielders.

The pitch here also offered pronounced turn and bounce, making the job of Japanese batters that much more difficult against a set of highly-skilled bowlers.

India's women's Kabaddi team arrive in Japan eyeing fourth straight Asian Games gold

GANDHINAGAR (GUJARAT), SEP 18: The Indian women's Kabaddi team has wrapped up its final training camp and travelled to Japan ahead of the 2026 Asian Games, closing out a structured, months-long preparation cycle under the guidance of the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of

India.

The team will look to defend the gold medal it won in Hangzhou, where India edged Chinese Taipei 26-25 in the final. It will be India's fourth Kabaddi gold in the women's event at the Games, part of an overall tally of 11 golds in the sport since its introduction,

according to a press release from PKL. Head coach Neeta Dadwe, a former India captain who played from 1991 to 2003 and has coached the national team for over a decade, including the 2014 Incheon and 2016 Asian Games campaigns, outlined the camp structure.

Satish Sharma calls for Sustained Push to Football Talent in Jammu & Kashmir

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FS&CA), Information Technology (IT), Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today attended the concluding league-stage match of the Khyber Cement Kashmir Super League 2026, powered by Athwas Retail and Athwas Hyundai, and reiterated the government's commitment to providing Jammu & Kashmir's young sporting talent with greater opportunities to compete, excel and build careers in sports.

The Minister was the Chief Guest at the final league-stage fixture between Swift Strikers Rainawari FC and Santorum North United FC, witnessing an impressive display of football. Swift Strikers Rainawari FC registered a comprehensive 6-0 victory, thereby securing the fourth and final berth in the play-offs.

With the completion of the league stage, Athwas India XI emerged as the league winners, while the successful teams now advance to the play-off

stage to compete for the coveted championship title.

During the event, Satish Sharma interacted with players, team officials and organisers and appreciated their efforts in creating a competitive platform for footballers from Jammu & Kashmir. He said that leagues such as the Kashmir Super League are important in providing young players with sustained match exposure and an opportunity to demonstrate their skills in a competitive environment.

The Minister said that Jammu & Kashmir possesses considerable sporting talent and that the focus of the Youth Services & Sports Department is increasingly on identifying talent at the grassroots level, providing regular competitive exposure and creating pathways for promising sportspersons to progress to higher levels.

He stressed that sporting development cannot be confined to infrastructure alone and must also include regular tournaments, professional coaching, quality competition, talent



identification and opportunities for players to gain experience.

Satish Sharma said that football enjoys a particularly strong following among the youth of Jammu & Kashmir, and tournaments of this nature can play an important role in converting that enthusiasm into structured sporting participation and competitive achievement.

He appreciated the participation of local players in the league and said that giving them opportunities to compete before home crowds can contribute significantly to their confidence and development. He also underscored the importance of encouraging youngsters to take up sports as a disciplined pursuit and, wherever their talent permits, as a potential career.

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The Minister also acknowledged the contribution of coaches, referees, technical officials, team managements, organisers, sponsors and football supporters towards making the tournament successful. He said that a vibrant sporting ecosystem requires the collective participation of government institutions, sporting bodies, private partners, coaches, athletes and the community.

Highlighting the wider objectives of the government's sports policy, Satish Sharma said that efforts are being made to strengthen sports infrastructure and expand opportunities for young people across Jammu & Kashmir. He maintained that the emphasis should remain on grassroots development, inclusivity, competitive opportunities and systematic nurturing of sporting talent. The Minister said that major sporting competitions also provide an opportunity to promote discipline, teamwork, leadership, perseverance and healthy lifestyles among young people. He called upon young

sters to make sports an integral part of their lives and encouraged talented players to remain committed to continuous training and improvement.

The Kashmir Super League has witnessed enthusiastic participation, competitive encounters and growing interest among football lovers, providing local players with an organised platform to compete and gain valuable experience.

Congratulating Athwas India XI on being crowned league winners, Satish Sharma also congratulated Swift Strikers Rainawari FC on securing their play-off berth following their emphatic victory. He extended his best wishes to all the teams entering the knockout phase and expressed hope that the play-offs would produce further exciting and competitive football.

The Minister reiterated that the government will continue to support initiatives that contribute to the development of sports in Jammu & Kashmir and provide young athletes with platforms where their talent can be recognized, developed and showcased.