

Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya kicksoff ASMITA Weightlifting League, says 'Mirabai Chanu perfect role model'

Minister of State for Sports and Youth Affairs Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse says ASMITA League will help identify and groom talent to meet India's Olympic Dreams

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The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated the 2025 season of ASMITA league in Modinagar, Uttar Pradesh today. The 2025 season of ASMITA began with the weightlifting league where forty-two girls were participating in eight different weight categories in the two-day event being held in the Open category.



In the current financial year 2025-26, 852 leagues across 15 sports disciplines have been planned. The leagues spread across the states and Union Territories, will feature over 70,000 female athletes. Last season, 550 leagues were conducted across 27 sports disciplines that enabled participation of 53,101 female athletes.

"It is our mission to create opportunities at every level and then spot talent and groom them. I see there is a lot of fire in the eyes of these kids who have turned up here in Modinagar. I am sure we will be able to find another Mirabai Chanu," said Dr. Mandaviya.

Tokyo Olympics silver medallist Mirabai Chanu was among the host of dignitaries who were present at the inauguration of the ASMITA weightlifting league. Boosting the morale of the participants was the Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse.



“ASMITA is a big pillar in our robust sports programme. Women have demonstrated their ability to excel in sports and sky is the limit for them. The intent in the eyes of the kids is something that needs to be cultivated,” said Smt. Khadse.

“You can’t have a better role model than Mirabai Chanu. Having come from a remote Manipur village and achieved excellence at the highest levels, she has created a benchmark for all women weightlifters. Her presence should inspire the young girls who are taking part in weightlifting,” said Dr. Mandaviya.



Dr. Mandaviya reiterated the government’s “360 degrees” commitment to sports and emphasised how this is

reflected in the sports budget that has increased four folds in the last 10 years.

“We are looking to reach every corner of India and tell aspiring sportspersons that we now have a pathway for you to rise and shine. Our Khelo Bharat Niti (sports policy) has been designed in this manner and having collaborated with the National Education Policy, we are giving a lot of impetus to school sports. These will be reflected in the Khelo India calendar that we have created. There will be no dearth of opportunities,” said Dr Mandaviya.

Olympian Mirabai said the ASMITA Leagues which started in 2021 have been a huge boon to women in sports. “It’s tiered structure is perfectly scripted. Everyone now has a vision on how to make it to the highest level. We didn’t get such opportunities and that’s why ASMITA is a blessing for women who want to play a sport and dream big,” said Mirabai.



ABOUT ASMITA

ASMITA (Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women) is part of Khelo India’s gender neutral mission to promote sports among women through leagues and competition. As such, the Sports Authority of India supports National Sports Federations to conduct Khelo India women’s leagues across multiple age groups at both zonal and national levels. Started in 2021, ASMITA leagues not only aim to increase the participation of women in sports but to utilise the leagues as a platform for identification of new talent across the length and breadth of India.

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