



‘You Are the Hope of 1.4 Billion Indians’: Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya Hails Athletes at KIUG 2025 Opening Ceremony

Khelo India University Games Rajasthan 2025 declared open

Two hundred and twenty-two Universities and 4448 to participate in Nov 24-Dec 5 Games across seven cities of Rajasthan

Two hundred and ninety-six gold medals in 23 events at stake

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Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, addressed participants at the opening ceremony of the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) 2025, affirming that the country’s young athletes are “the hope of 1.4 billion Indians.”

“As I stand here, what I see is not just a crowd of athletes — I see the hopes of 1.4 billion Indians. You will be the sporting heroes of tomorrow. You are the ones who will carry the nation’s tricolour to podiums across the world. With this hope, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all the athletes participating in this event, to the organisers, to the ministers of the Rajasthan government, and to all colleagues associated with sports administration,” said Dr Mandaviya.



He said the nation places great confidence in its university sportspersons as the champions who will elevate India's presence on global sporting podiums in the years ahead.

The Khelo India University Games Rajasthan 2025 got off to a colourful start at the iconic Sawai Mansingh Stadium here today evening. Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Bhajanlal Sharma declared KIUG 2025 open in the presence of Dr Mandaviya, senior ministers, administrators, SAI officials and fans.



This is the fifth edition of KIUG, held under the aegis of the Sports Authority of India in collaboration with the Rajasthan government, the State Sports Council, the Association of Indian Universities and with technical support from the national sports federations.

The November 24 to December 5 Games, to be held across seven cities across Rajasthan, will see a whopping 4448 athletes from 222 Universities compete in 23 medal sports.



Kho-kho will be a demonstration event and as per the Union sports ministry's plans to promote indigenous sports. Two hundred and ninety-six gold medals will be up for grabs.

In every major sporting nation, universities serve as talent nurseries, and this shift has begun in India as well. The Union Minister said the Khelo India University Games will further strengthen these possibilities.

“Lovely Professional University sent 11 athletes to Tokyo 2020, and 24 to Paris Olympics 2024. Just imagine: when 21% of the entire Indian contingent comes from a single university, then if every university in the country uses its full potential, imagine what we can achieve,” said Dr Mandaviya.

Dr Mandaviya further added: “From DAV College, Jalandhar, 27 Olympians have emerged; from Delhi University, nice players reached the Paris Olympics. What greater proof can there be that when universities produce Olympians, our path to becoming a global sporting superpower by 2047 becomes clear.”



“Friends, at this moment 4.5 crore (45 million) young people are studying in different universities across the country. For me, this is not just data — it is the greatest strength of New India, its greatest confidence, and its greatest competitive edge. If we tap into this potential correctly, it can make us a global sporting power. Our universities are no longer just centres of learning; they are now the strongest engines of the country’s sporting revolution,” said Dr Mandaviya.

Dr Mandaviya added: “I agree that we are the land of Takshashila and Nalanda Universities — but we are also the country of legends like Major Dhyhan Chand, Milkha Singh, and Neeraj Chopra. Along with our academic excellence, we must now become a nation that celebrates our sporting excellence as well.

The opening ceremony was marked by pomp and grandeur. Two international sportsperson – boxer Arundhati Chaudhary and compound archer Rajesh Chauhan – handed the Viksit Rajasthan smart torch to Shri Sharma and Dr Mandaviya. The torch is solar-powered and has a built-in camera and it travelled the length and breadth of Rajasthan before culminating its journey at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium this evening.

Welcoming KIUG 2025 participants, Rajasthan CM Sharma thanked the Union sports ministry for awarding the hosting rights of Khelo India University Games 2025 to Rajasthan. “It’s a matter of great to be hosting the Games and winning the rights despite the tough competitions from various States/UTs. I thank Dr Mandaviya for letting us take PM Modi’s vision for a young India forward.”

Sharma added: “We are seeing the vision of PM Modi unfurl in front of our eyes. PM Modi saw the talent in our youth and Khelo India is that platform for athletes to demonstrate their talent. Khelo India is an equal opportunity platform and everyone can play and show their talent. Dreams keep the fire burning and you have come here to challenge the odds and learn from wins and losses.”

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