

# 9th International Abilympics

**Bordeaux, France**  
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## History of Abilympics

Abilympics are vocational skills competitions for persons with disabilities. The First International Abilympics was held in Tokyo in 1981 to commemorate the United Nations International Year for persons with disabilities as a part of efforts to improve vocational skills and increase employment opportunities for them. The International Abilympics are held once every four years in different parts of the world. Subsequently International Abilympics were held in Columbia, Hong Kong, Australia, Czech Republic, India, Japan and South Korea respectively. The focus of Abilympics is showcasing the vocational abilities, boost motivation and increase participation in socio-economic activities as a part of the rights-based approach to development. It also provides an exposure to the participants to latest development in their respective fields and forge friendship amongst themselves. Abilympics are organized jointly by the International Abilympic Federation, Rehabilitation International and the host country with the support of their government.

### Abilympics in India

The history of Abilympics in India dates back to the first International Abilympics itself. It is a story rich with pride, determination and success.

India has been participating in the International Abilympics since its inception. The performance of a 14 member team from India during the 5<sup>th</sup> International Abilympics held in Prague in 2000, was very impressive. It won three gold and three bronze medals as well as a Certificate of Excellence. The Executive Committee of IAF

unanimously accepted India's bid to host the 6<sup>th</sup> IA in 2003. As a first step to organize the International event, National Abilympic Association of India (NAAI) with Amar Jyoti Charitable Trust as the nodal agency was formed in May 2001 at the behest of Government of India. The Headquarters of NAAI is located in Delhi and its activities are guided by a Governing Body which has members from across the country.

The main objective of NAAI, inter alia, is to discover and nurture the talent of persons with disabilities; create awareness in the society at large about the productive skills of persons with disabilities. The headquarters of NAAI was established at Amar Jyoti Charitable Trust, Delhi. The five zonal offices i.e. North, South, East, West & Centre were established to facilitate ease of functioning. These offices were established in NGOs working in the disability sector with requisite infrastructure. This helped to create a network amongst the NGOs, the Government and the Society to spread the message of abilympics.

Under the aegis of NAAI, State, Sub-regional and Regional Abilympics are organised in different zones where in addition to the events generally included in the International Abilympics a few events which promote economic self-reliance in the respective regions are organized. These range from embroidery to painting, jewellery making to creating web pages, wood carving to photography. The medal winners of the Regionals participate in the National Abilympics. Participants for International Abilympics are selected from amongst the gold medal winners of the Nationals.



The First National Abilympics was held in Delhi in 2002 prior to India hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> International Abilympics in New Delhi during November 2003. It was for the first time in the disability movement that ability, not disability, was the focus of the events on a mega scale. Subsequently, Regional and National Abilympics have been organized on a regular basis and India participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> International Abilympics held in Japan and South Korea. All the medal winners of the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Internationals were awarded cash prizes by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India.

Since the inception of Abilympics, the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has always been a major supporter. Financial support is also received from some State Governments, the corporate sector, public /private sector, NGOs, and individual donors. In some cases, educational and technical institutes support

some of the events by providing facilities and offering their expertise.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> National Abilympics**

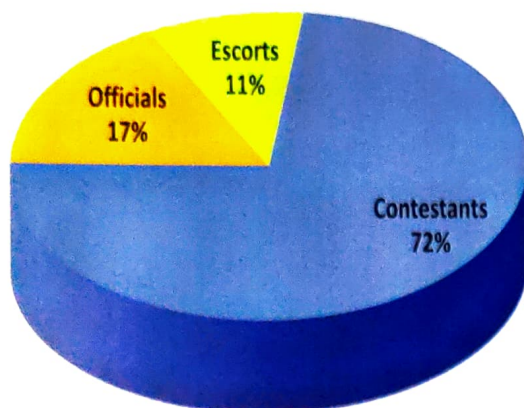
The 4<sup>th</sup> National Abilympics was held from November 3-5, 2014 at NITTTR, Chandigarh in which 33 events were organised. In addition to the medal winners from all the zones, some lateral entries were also accepted from individuals who could not participate in the regionals but have acquired expertise or earning their livelihood using their respective skills. 75% of the budget was sanctioned by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disability, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and the balance 25% was raised by donations. The event was inaugurated by Shri Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment. Category-wise and disability-wise break-up of the participants is given below :



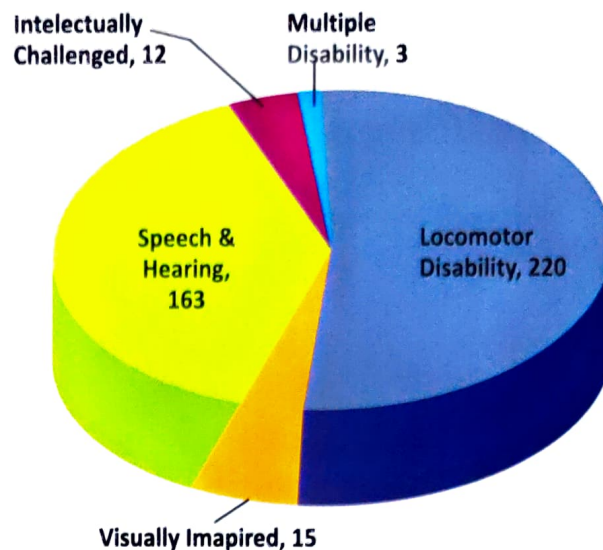


Category-wise wise break-up of the participants and disability-wise break-up of contestants is given below :

Disability-wise break-up of contestants



Disability-wise break-up of contestants



The Hon'ble Minister announced cash awards of Rs. 21,000/-, 15000/- and 11,000/- to the gold, silver and bronze medal winners respectively.

## Preparations for 9<sup>th</sup> IA

### Skill Evaluation

The skill assessment of all the 31 Gold medal winners of the 4<sup>th</sup> Nationals was carried out to assess the skill level of the contestants vis-a vis the international standard. The main criterion for selection was their medal winning potential.

The Skill evaluation trials were conducted at Blind Peoples' Association, Ahmedabad on May 1-2, 2015. As a result of the assessment, and based on the recommendations of the Judges, 19 contestants were selected for participation in the 9<sup>th</sup> International Abilympics. The names of 2 experts to act as Judges in the International event were also finalised.

## The Indian Contingent

The region-wise distribution of the contestants selected for participation in the 9<sup>th</sup> International Abilympics was : 5 from North, 1 from South, 8 from West Zone, 3 from East Zone and 2 from Central zone.

The Indian contingent for the 9<sup>th</sup> International Abilympics consisted of 19 contestants, 2 Judges, 8 officials/ escorts and 1 sign language interpreter (as given), all of whom came from various parts of the country. The contestants took part in a total of 19 events.



S.No.	Event No.	Event Name	Name of the Participant	Disability
1	V03	Cabinet Making - Basic	Mukesh Kumar	SH
2	V04	Crochet	Sonali Arjun Kadam	SH
3	V05	Embroidery	Mohd. Sikandar Mazhar Shaikh	SH
4	V07	Hand Knitting	Mohinder Singh	LD
5	V09	Painting	Sangram Jyoti Chowdhury	SH
6	V10	Pottery	Praveen Dattaram Bambarkar	SH
7	V13	Wood Carving	Jamaluddin Ansari	SH
8	V21	Creating Web pages	Rajneesh Agrawal	LD
9	V22	Data Processing - Advanced	Ramavtar Singh	LD
10	V24	Desktop Publishing	Gaurav Patel	SH
11	V26	Photography - Outdoor	P. Sai Krishnan	LD
12	V27	Photography - Studio	Dhananjay Vilas Shelar	SH
13	V28	Poster Design	Mohd. Rahimtullah Haroon Rashid	SH
14	V31	Bicycle Assembly	Md.Hamid Ali	LD
15	V33	CAD-Industrial Design	Abhijit Shirish Jagtap	SH



S.No.	Event No.	Event Name	Name of the Participant	Disability
16	V37	Electronic Assembly Basic	Deepak Kumar Dwivedi	LD
17	V41	Artificial Limb Socket Making	Trikam Parmar	SH
18	V46	Jewellery	Shammi Kumar	LD
19	V49	Tailoring	Shamim Alam	LD
20	V24	Judge	Dr. Bhushan Punani	
21	V05	Judge	Ms. Minetta Paatil	
22		Official	Dr. Uma Tuli	
23		Official	Dr. A K Datta	
24		Official	Mr. Kanubhai Tailor	
25		Official	Ms. Trilochan Dhillon	
26		Official	Mr. Sumit Roy	
27		Official	Mr. Kamlesh Pandey	
28		Official	Ms. Sulekha Kumari	
29		Sign Language Interpreter	Ms. Tejalben Lakhia	
30		Escort	Mr. Chirag Topiwala	

## Training

Training plays an important role before participation in any competition particularly at the international level. The participants were requested to continue their training at their respective places of residence/work to improve their skills. The regional vice presidents, members of the GB were requested to constantly review the training.

Prior to departure for participation in the International Abilympics a two week training programme was organized in Delhi under the guidance of professionals / mentors either at Amar Jyoti Charitable Trust or at their institutes. The final task assignments received from the organizers in France were used during the

training. Necessary raw materials and tools / equipment were made available during the training.

## Kit

An official kit including a blazer, trouser, shirt, 2 pairs of socks, shoes, tie and sarees for the ladies was given to each participant. In addition a suitcase, a shoulder bag, passport pouch and a toilet bag were also given to each participant. Since a majority of the participants were vegetarian, packed snacks were provided to each participant by Blind People's Association, Ahmedabad. Disabled Welfare Trust of India, Surat, Bal Kalyan Sanstha, Pune and NAAI.





Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. felicitated all the members of the contingent on return and presented each member with a Tab (I-ball). Representative of The hans Foundation also attended the function.



## Travel Arrangements

Visa, Mediclaim, air tickets and foreign currency was arranged for all the members of the Indian contingent. The contingent travelled from Paris to Bordeaux and back by coach. The air tickets for all the 19 contestants was sponsored by The hans Foundation and this facilitated participation of the Indian contingent in the International event. Most of the members of the contingent paid for the visa fees. In addition officials and some members of the GB also donated funds for meeting the expenses.





## Registration

The registered was completed online in advance for all the teams. One of the two volunteers attached to the Indian contingent was well versed in Hindi. All the participants were given a bag containing delegations handbook, pen drive, pen, diary, ID cards for access to venue, meals, transport, TBC pass to allow for free travel in the tram etc. as well as for the opening/closing ceremony and receptions. The programme for compulsory excursion tours for the contestants was also circulated. The organizers took special pains to ensure that most of the places are accessible to all.

## Inauguration

The Opening Ceremony was held on Thursday March 24, 2016 at 8 pm beginning with a march past



of flags of participating countries. The well known broadcaster Louise Ekland acted as master of ceremonies and the programme was interspersed with entertainment of different international cultural influences. Outstanding artists and Pop Singer Victoria Modesta entertained the audience with their graphical

and aesthetic performances. All through the proceedings were interpreted in sign language for persons with hearing impairment. There was a wide coverage of the event in the local print and electronic media. The function was followed by a welcome dinner. This also provided an opportunity to exchange information and culture amongst delegations, participants and invites.



## Orientation

A meeting of the judges and their orientation was organized in the forenoon of March 24, 2016. The procedure and evaluation criterion of the events were explained. Each event was conducted under the supervision of a Chief Judge and a number of judges from different countries. A novel system of awarding marks on different parameters and eliminating two extreme scores from judges on various parameters was followed. This system of awarding marks eliminated the possibility of any bias.

The orientation of the contestants for each contest was conducted in the afternoon the same day. The time and place of orientation for each contest was specifically designated. During the orientation detailed information



about the methodology for holding the contest, necessary materials and equipments to be provided by the organizers was given. The details of the tasks and general dos and don'ts were also explained and doubts clarified. The plans for the seating arrangements were decided by draw of lots. On the day of the contest each contestant was accompanied by an official / escort / sign language interpreter. The sign language interpreter was of great help for communication with speech and hearing contestants.

## Venue & Facilities



All the contests were organized at Hall No. 1, of the Exhibition Centre. The facilities were clearly marked and barricaded to ensure that visitors and non participants do not enter the contest area without permission of the Chief Judge. All the equipment and raw materials required for the contest were available for each contestant at contest site. The equipment brought by contestants was checked by the Judges before the competition



## Events

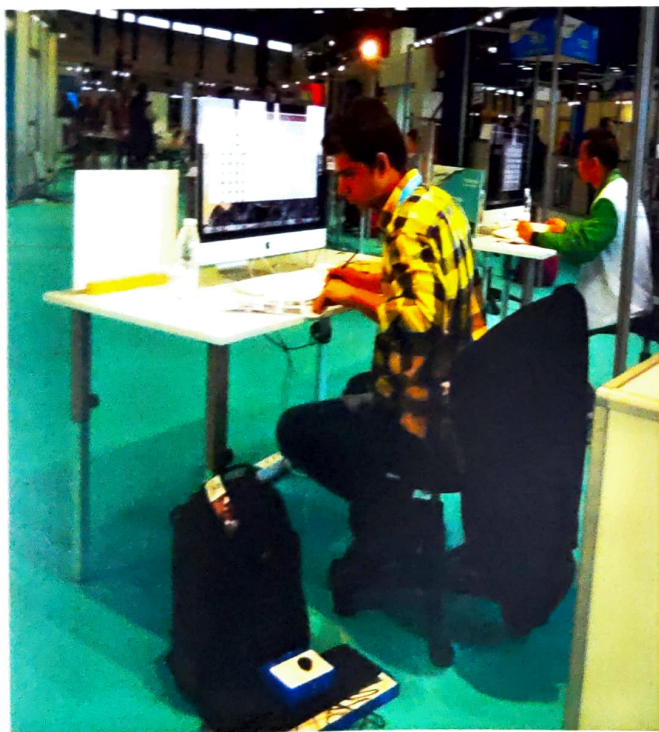
The contestants were required to reach the contest site one hour before the start of the contest to check all the equipment, tools and raw materials and tools provided at the contest site. A copy of the task assignment and in some cases a sample of the task was also displayed at the site for reference

A total of 49 events were conducted under the 5 broad categories i.e. Craft, Food, Information & Communication Technologies, Industry & Services. The events were spread over a period of 2 days during March 25-26, 2016. A total of 511 contestants, 215 judges, 194 interpreters, 194 assistants, 181 officials, 162 observers and 110 Abilympics partners took part in the abilympics. France had a contingent of 62 contestants followed by Russia with 35, Japan 31 and Korea and Hongkong 30 contestants each. More than 600 volunteers including the students of high school and training schools assisted the organizers and the delegations during the Abilympics. In addition delegations from a large number of countries including Western countries were present during the contests. The contestants were a mix of





employees, entrepreneurs and amateurs they all had undergone training before coming for participation in the international event. The interaction between contestants from different countries helped to forge foundations for new and lasting friendships and act as a motivator to improve their skills. It also acted as a global platform to witness and innovative techniques, latest development in technologies, equipments and tools.



Photography Outdoor, Painting, Computer Assembly, Creating Web Pages, Poster Design and Wood Carving had the maximum number of participants while Data Processing - Advanced, Cabinet Making - Basic Course and Electronic Assembly - Basic Course had a lesser number of contestants.

South Korea won the maximum number of medals followed by Taiwan and China. India won 1 silver in Creating Web Pages, 1 bronze in Embroidery and 1 Certificate of excellence in Photography Outdoor. A table showing the country- wise list of medal winners is given in Annexure 'I'

A large number of persons including students from various schools visited the contest site which had turned into a beehive of action. The contestants who were not participating in the contests in any given point of time had to go on a compulsory sight seeing tour.

It was an opportunity of a lifetime to see the skills and abilities of the participants in different events. The abilities displayed by the participants in computer events were highly impressive. The atmosphere in the contest area for these events was absolutely calm with contrast to other events like furniture-making, tailoring etc. which were busting with physical activities. Dr. Bhushan Punani, Mrs. Minetta Paatil from India acted as Judges in Desktop Publishing and Embroidery respectively. The Chief Judge for each event was from France. The results of all the contest were announced and medals distributed during the closing ceremony.

The marks obtained by each contestant were subsequently communicated to all the delegations.



## IAF Assembly & Executive Committee Meetings

A meeting of the Executive Committee of IAF was held on March 23, 2016. The Secretary General presented the progress report. The elections for new office bearers for the term 2016- to tenth IA were conducted. The members were informed that since the number of nominated candidates was 11, which was within the maximum number of officers stipulated in the constitution i.e 12, the assembly will be requested to elect all the candidates without using ballot papers. The President and Vice-President will be decided among the officers elect.

The members were also informed that the number of member organizations from different parts of the world is continuously increasing and after the 8th Assembly meeting held in Seoul, South Korea in 2011, eleven organizations have been approved as new IAF members. These organisations represent Nigeria, Uganda, Mauritius, West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago, Russia, Pakistan, Germany, Spain, Mongolia and Nepal.

The committee was informed that so far no firm bid has been received for organizing the 10th International Abilympics and discussions are at preliminary stage for the same. The members agreed that they would wait till a firm and positive commitment is received from the host country. Dr. Tuli suggested that it would be nice if Abilympics and World Skills competitions can be held together to promote inclusion. This view was supported by some members.

9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IAF General Assembly was

held the same afternoon where representatives from 25 countries/regions and observers from 3 countries were present.

Mr. Nobuaki Fujii, Chairman IAF welcomed all the members. The members present confirmed the agenda as proposed by the Secretariat. Mr. Noel Roger welcomed all the assembly members and expressed his thanks to IAF for entrusting France with the responsibility of hosting the 9th International Abilympics in France. The members were informed that the executive committee has endorsed the nomination for 11 candidates unopposed for the period 2016 to tenth IA. In the progress report IAF, Secretary General reported that according to the amendment of Article 6 of IAF constitution and Section 4 & 5 of the rules of procedures for election of Officers has been endorsed by the Executive Committee and requested for the approval of the same by the Assembly. This was unanimously approved. Thereafter the election of the 11 officers for the term 2016-next IA were unanimously approved by the assembly. Dr. Uma Tuli from India was amongst the new members elected to the executive committee.

The list of 11 candidates nominated and approved by the member organizations as members of the executive committee for the period 2015 till tenth IA is as follows :

1. Ms. Nadine Mather – Brown (Australia)
2. Ms. Dominique Dressler (Austria)
3. Mr. Chi Junchang (China)
4. Mr. Markku Aunola (Finland)
5. Dr. Joseph Kwok (Hong Kong)
6. Dr. Uma Tuli (India)



7. Mr. Nobuaki Fujii (Japan)
8. Dr. Weam Abou Hamdan (Lebanon)
9. Mr. Paul Chi-Meng Pun (Macau)
10. Mr. Khtijah Sulieman (Malaysia)
11. Ms. Venus Ilagan (RI)

Mr. Nobuaki Fujii of JEED, Japan and Mr. Noel Roger, President of Abilympics France were elected as President and Vice President respectively for the same term.

Mr. Simon Bartley, President World Skills International (WSI) addressed the assembly and apprised the members of the activities of World Skills and emphasized the need for a greater interaction between IAF and WSI. He congratulated the Abilympics team for increasing awareness about the skills of persons with disabilities globally. The assembly also approved the membership of 11 organisations from different countries endorsed by the Executive Committee. The members were informed that the proposal for holding the next IA in Macau has not been approved and invited members to suggest the host for the next International event. Abilympics Russia indicated that they are organizing World Skills Competition in Kazan in 2019 and will explore the possibility of hosting the next International Abilympics at the same time. Since no firm commitment was received the members requested IAF Secretariat to continue to discussion on the subject and decided to wait till the IAF is able to finalise the next host country.

## Exhibition, Demonstrations & Other Events

On this occasion an exhibition was organized in which 100 exhibitors took part. It had a number of exhibits including those for persons with disabilities which included pharmaceutical companies under clean room conditions, aerospace and aeronautical subcontractors, training systems etc. An area was also dedicated for vocational orientation and employment opportunities in partnership with number of service partners. In addition the number of interactive events were organized in which the participants and visitors could take part. Demonstrations, cultural performances and other events were also organized to entertain the visitors and participants from all over the world. Performances by traditional groups and cultural delegations by different countries entertained the visitors. Health Zone had facilities for assessing the healthcare, for massage therapy etc.







In addition to the competitions International conferences for discussions on future challenges for integration of persons with disability in the mainstream were also organized. These included:

- » Employment of persons with disabilities,
- » Training and disability,
- » Professionalization of adapted companies to a European scale
- » Technological innovations for the benefit of persons with disabilities and
- » Methods of supporting persons with disabilities in different countries.

These conferences were open to the public also and were well attended and provided the forum to the participants for exchange of opinions and information.

Tours of the city for full day or half day were organized for the benefit of the visiting delegations.

## Closing Ceremony

The Closing Ceremony was held on March 26, 2016. At the Closing Ceremony medals were awarded to the winners of all the contests. The medals were awarded by various dignitaries. It



was a proud moment for the winners who waived their National Flags from the podium. The Indian contingent cheered Mr. Rajneesh Agrawal and Mohd. Sikander when they went to receive the medals. Most of the medals went to South Korea, Chinese Taipei, France, China and Japan. On this occasion a number of troupes entertained the audience with their spectacular performances. This was a joyous occasion for the medal winners.

Mr. Noel Roger, President of Abilympics France, returned the International Abilympics flag to Mr. Nobuaki Fujii, President IAF who will keep the flag until a host for the 10th International Abilympics is decided.

The closing ceremony was followed by a Cocktail Dinner and Farewell Party. On this occasion a grand display of fireworks was also organized.

During the Abilympics Ms. Segolene Neuville, Minister of Social Affairs and Disability, Ms. Myriam El Khomri, Minister of Labour, Employment, Vocational Training and Social Dialogue and Mr. Alain Rousset, President of Aquitaine Region visited Bordeaux and witnessed the events.





## Conclusion

The period leading upto the 9th International Abilympics was really hectic, demanding and full of hard work both for the contestants and NAAI officials. Despite persistent efforts of the Secretary General and President grant from the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disability, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment was not sanctioned. Despite all the odds it was decided to participate in the 9th International Abilympics. The participation was possible because of the financial support from Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd, The hans Foundation, Amar Jyoti Charitable Trust, Blind People's Association and Disable Welfare Trust of India. All the participants and a number of individuals also contributed to the kitty. Participation in the 9th International Abilympics was possible due to a convergence of resources in the real sense.

Abilympics provides an opportunity to the participants of all age groups to upgrade their vocational skills, boosts their motivation, improve access to jobs, education and other vocational services. Participation in the International Abilympics also provides an




exposure to latest equipments and tools and witness the high level of professional competence of participants from different countries. It also helps to highlight the fact the use of latest technology and appropriate adaptations in various equipments, tools and machinery can enable such persons to perform effectively in newer areas of employment. The Indian team won a silver, bronze and one certificate of excellence even though a better performance was expected from the contestants.

## Our Generous Supporters

1. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd.
  2. The hans Foundation
  3. Amar Jyoti Charitable Trust, Delhi
  4. Blind Peoples' Association, Ahmedabad
  5. Disabled Welfare Trust of India, Surat
  6. Praj Industries, Pune
- & a number of individual supporters



## Country wise list of medal winners

RANKING	COUNTRY	 GOLD	 SILVER	 BRONZE	TOTAL
1	Korea	15	11	6	32
2	Chinese Taipei	10	4	2	16
3	France	9	8	8	25
4	China	8	6	6	20
5	Japan	2	3	5	10
6	Thailand	1	3	4	8
7	Canada	1	3	0	4
8	Malaysia	1	1	2	4
9	Australia	1	0	0	1
10	Hong Kong	0	3	2	5
11	Macau	0	2	1	3
12	Mongolia	0	2	0	2
13	India	0	1	1	2
14	Philippines	0	1	0	1
15	Russia	0	0	3	3
16	Spain	0	0	2	2
17	Belarus	0	0	1	1
18	Nepal	0	0	1	1
19	Singapore	0	0	1	1