



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Bengaluru's Abhishek Prabhakar wins silver medal at inter district junior athletic championship

Photo: Rishabh Sunbaram

The 20-year-old athlete aims to represent India at the Olympics in the future

Sandya.Fernandes@timesgroup.com

It was an injury that forced Abhishek Prabhakar to quit cricket and pursue the tracks, but this hasn't dampened his spirits. Instead, the 20-year-old athlete from Jain (Deemed-to-be) University — Center for Management Studies worked hard and made everyone proud by winning a silver medal in the 200-meter race at the Karnataka State Inter District Junior Athletic Championship last month. Abhishek is now all set to represent the state at the national level.

Speaking to ET, he said, "I had always been into sports, and cricket was what I wanted to pursue initially due to my injury, however, I ended up pursuing athletics instead, and eventually joined the Indian Athletic Academy where I have received training under Bishan Agnisreedhar Baccan." The Bengaluru lad, who has represented the state at various championships, follows a strict regime and takes his practice sessions very seriously — all this while attending college full-time. "I follow a strict diet. Junk food and sugar are a big no-no. I have home-cooked food and eat only brown rice. It's tough for me, because I used to love eating sweets, but because of my training, I have to maintain this diet. I practice four hours a day, and before every championship, I go for three sessions a day," he says, adding that the toughest part of being an athlete is the training that he undergoes. "There have been times when I have cried, but it's all a part of the process," he shares.

Abhishek, who aims to represent India at the Olympics one day, says that athletes in the country don't get the same treatment as other sportspersons do. "Athletes aren't promoted the way cricketers are. There are facilities available for athletes, but somehow the support from the government is lacking. More opportunities and adequate government support will help us a lot. There should also be some rewards for athletes, so that it motivates them to perform better. My ultimate goal is to be the fastest Indian and represent the country at the Olympics one day," he sums up.

ATHLETES AREN'T PROMOTED THE WAY CRICKETERS ARE. THERE ARE FACILITIES AVAILABLE, BUT SOMEHOW GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IS LACKING

Abhishek Prabhakar follows a strict regime and takes his practice sessions seriously; [right] the athlete shows off his medals and trophy

