After ‘Swachh’, Bedi bats for sports to realise ‘Swast Bharat’ vision

Isa Gramotsavam is a sporting extravaganza for the villages in Tamil Nadu. The finale of the 12 Isma Gramotsavam took place at the Codissia Grounds in Coimbatore on Sunday. The month-long sporting event that includes volleyball and throwball to the villages of Tamil Nadu, witnessed the participation of over 10,000 players from over 4,500 villages.

Other than Isma Bedi, the guest list included Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and M. Natarajan, MP, Coimbatore. Union Minister Rathore felt it is great to have an event that has broken age, gender and caste barriers. Gramotsavam saw the participation of people from various age groups starting from 13 years to 77 years. He said, “We have one life, we have to do the best irrespective of winning or defeat. This event takes the sporting spirit to the rural areas of the State.”

The day-long celebrations also had rural folk performances and food festival other than the volleyball and throwball finals for men and women respectively. Gramotsavam also tried to provide a platform for folk art forms of Tamil Nadu including Jikkatam, Ollattam, Sakkali Kochiattam, Kikkilattam, etc. These art forms are slowly fading into oblivion.

Jagjivan Vasudev, founder of Isma, said that Indians should bring playfulness back, because there is no celebration without playful ness. He said, “Unlike other actions, sports require more intensity of involvement. Hence, everyone should play. You can throw ball or even a potato would suffice.”

The finals saw a jubilant Devarayarapam team from Coimbatore winning the trophy against Gobichettipalayam’s Murugan Pudur in throwball, whereas Cuddalore Karunguzhi won against Vellore Latheri village in volleyball.

Speaking to the media, Union Minister of State Rajyavardhan Rathore said that the government is handling the Kashmir matter well, and the talks should also include the opinion of the people from Jammu and Ladakh.

He also appreciated the efforts of Indian shooter Abhinav Bindra, who announced his retirement.

Rathore said, “Bindra struggled to get to this position, and we should use his knowledge and expertise to train more world-class shooters.”