

## Hard work and dedication is the key to achieving any goal

Dr. Namrata Dhiman speaks with Olympic Bronze medalist Sushil Kumar, and his coach Shri Satpal.

**Namrata** : Congratulations! It's really nice to meet both of you here at Chhatrasal Stadium. How do you feel being virtually a hero of India?

**Sushil** : It feels great.

**Namrata** : Tell me what does this place mean to you?

**Sushil** : This place is like a “*mandir*” (a place of worship) to me. I have been coming here regularly for past 14 years. It's the place where I learnt wrestling, where I grew up among friends and I won this Olympic medal. It is my identity. It's the most important place in my life.

**Namrata** : No wonder, this “*akhada*” at chhatrasal is now world famous! I read an article recently where the most renowned wrestlers of India are calling it “Mahabali Satpal's akhara” at Chhatrasal. What do you feel about it?

**Satpal** : That is very generous of them. This place is very dear to all of us and we are all very proud of it!

**Namrata** : But do you do anything else here besides train wrestlers?

**Satpal** : This stadium is the most important venue for the Delhi Government and both Republic Day and Independence Day functions are held here. We also conduct training in 26 disciplines including basketball, volley ball, lawn tennis etc.





**Namrata** : **What kind of facilities and support does the Delhi Government provide to all these potential medal winners?**

**Satpal** : Delhi Government has provided us with all facilities. For instance, for wrestling we have 6 mats of international standard. Facilities and Training equipments are upgraded from time to time keeping in breast with latest techniques and international standards.

**Namrata** : **Were these also given to Sushil?**

**Satpal** : Yes, like others, Sushil was also provided with complete kits and costumes and given all facilities including proper diet prepared at the stadium itself. We are grateful to the Government for providing us with all adequate facilities and unconditional support, motivation and encouragement from time to time. Our superiors have built a great team and this ability to work together towards a common vision has helped us tremendously.

**Namrata** : **Sushil, how did you prepare for the competition?**

**Sushil** : We undergo rigorous training here. Our training starts at 4 AM in the morning which includes exercises and practicing. For Olympic competitions our coaches at Chhatrasal Stadium. Mr Ramphal, Mr Yashvir and Mr. Virender taught us special techniques keeping in mind, the wrestling techniques followed by wrestlers of various countries. For this we were shown CDs of wrestling bouts of American and Russian wrestlers. This really helped us to prepare for competitions. All this wouldn't have been possible without the able guidance and supervision of our coach.

**Namrata** : **Do you play any other game?**

**Sushil** : Yes; I play football, basketball, handball and also like to swim to keep myself fit.

**Namrata** : **Whom do you want to give credit for your success?**

**Sushil** : First and foremost to God and then my Guruji Mahabali Satpalji, my parents and grand parents. My parents had heard of Satpalji and had left me under his wing when I was in standard 7. Since then he has coached and mentored me. For whatever I have

achieved and I am now, I owe it all to Satpalji. Besides receiving training, we have developed a very good rapport/relation with all players here. We are like one big family. In fact, I now religiously practice 'Dhyan' (meditation) daily. One technique which has helped me immensely is concentrating. This is a pre-requisite for wrestling or any other game. Last but not the least I would like to thank all my countrymen who have supported and encouraged me.

**Namrata :** **Satpalji, is there anything you would like to say?**

**Satpal :** I am very proud of Sushil. My head is held high because of him. He is a well disciplined and dedicated boy. When I call him at 4.00 am in morning practice; he is here at 3.45 am. It is his "tapasya" of 14 years, which has paid dividends. We are really grateful for all the support that we have received from everyone and the faith is reposed on us and we were so motivated and encouraged that we brought back a medal in Asian Games as well as Olympic Games. I have personally been very impressed with the messages which the YUVA programme is giving. By emphasizing values, character building, honesty and diligence, YUVA is giving the right message to today's youth. The YUVA trainings have a big impact on our Physical education and yoga teachers and on me also! We employ all its principles in our training including that given to Sushil and Yogeshwer Dutt.

**Sushil :** Yes, even I like YUVA, particularly "Jadu ki Jhappi". In fact the first thing I did after winning the medal was give Satpalji a Jadu ki Jhappi !

**Namrata :** **Were there times when you ever felt like giving up?**

**Sushil :** No. I never thought of giving up because even if at times I was disheartened, Satpalji who is not just my Guru but like a father to me would always help me and encourage me and I have never failed him, I have regularly been winning medals, and this has kept my spirits high.



**Namrata : Sushil, tell us something about your background. Your family has been a big support to you.**

Sushil : I come from a middle class family of farmers. My grandfather was a state-level wrestler and my father also used to practice wrestling. I have two younger brothers. My family has been very supportive of me all through. My mother daily sends me freshly prepared "Butter and milk of Buffalo" (which she herself milks). I am also fond of "Gajar Ka Halwa and Kheer" which she prepares for me. They have always been with me and have blessed me I am thankful to God that I could stand/live up to their expectation.

**Namrata : Is there any message you would like to give to students of Delhi Government students?**

Sushil : I am also a product of Delhi Government Schools and I meet many students from these schools during my training here at Chhatrasal Stadium. I would first of all like to congratulate them for their excellent performance in the Board exams. I too have been inspired by them, and I thought that if they could work so hard and do so well, then so could I! I would just like to tell them that "Stay away from bad habits. Have control over your emotions. Determine what specific goal you want to achieve. Then dedicate yourself to its attainment with unswerving "determination". In order to excel, you must be completely dedicated to your chosen task. You must also be prepared to work hard. Without 100% dedication, you won't be able to do this. Also always respect your elders and seek their blessings."

**Namrata : Any incident which you would like to share with us?**

Sushil : Yes, I am overwhelmed by the response I get wherever I go but I was particularly moved when I received a request from a child in America who is suffering from cancer and wanted my autograph. I was moved to tears. I have offered to extend any kind of support that may be needed. I wish him speedy recovery. I feel blessed; so much love is being given to me by everyone.

**Namrata : Satpalji, what are your plans for future?**

Satpal : We are training about 300 children here out of which 52 are already world level players. As Sushil just rightly said our aim is to get as many medals for our country as we can in Commonwealth Games to be held in 2010. I can promise at least 20 medals. Also we are preparing for London Olympics to be held in 2010. Our honourable Secretary Ma'am and country men have shown so much faith in us that our task has become all the more difficult because now we must aim higher. All the players are in good spirit because of the encouragement and support which they have received.

**Namrata : Thank you! It was a pleasure talking to you.**