

INDIAN OPEN MARATHON

Yadav, Kadam emerge winners

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Braving a chilly morning, more than 12,500 entrants ran the Mawana Sugars Indian Open Marathon in the capital on Sunday.

Held under the aegis of the Athletics Federation of India and the Delhi State Athletics Association, the marathon saw entries from the Delhi Police, Indian Army, Air Force and the para-military forces, corporate houses and colleges vying for the ₹15 lakh prize purse.

While Uttar Pradesh's Arvind Kumar Yadav emerged victorious in the men's category, Nilam Maruti Kadam took away the women's honours. Both Yadav and Kadam received ₹2.5 lakhs each and Mawana sugar cubes equivalent to their weight after crossing the finish line in the full marathon category.

The 24-year-old Yadav, runner-up last year, won in two hours 21 minutes and 44 seconds, while Maharashtra's Kadam clocked three hours one minute and two seconds.

"The weather was good and conditions suited my running. There was not much competition from other athletes and I had full faith in my abilities. My next target is to qualify for the Commonwealth and Asian



Maharashtra's Nilam Maruti Kadam (from left) en route to her win in the full marathon women's category at the Mawana Sugars Indian Open, while Arvind Kumar Yadav (right) receives the winner's trophy in the men's section in the capital on Sunday.

Games in 2014 and to realise that aim, I will train hard and participate in selective marathons," Yadav said.

"A year of hard work and training at the Guru Gobind Singh Sports College in Lucknow finally paid off. I would like to thank my coach Srijesh Bhatia for all his support," added Yadav, who covered a distance of 42.195 km.

Meanwhile Kadam, who finished second in the half marathon category last year, said she made up her mind to run the full distance race only last evening.

"I had practiced hard for the event and decided to cover the full distance. Seriously, I wasn't expecting to finish at the top and that too in three hours," said the 23-year-old Kadam.

In the half-marathon for male veteran's category, Jawahar Prasad clocked one hour 20 minutes and 57 seconds for the first position while Neelu Gupta triumphed in the female section in one hour 24 minutes and 37 seconds.

In the half-marathon male category, Vishram Meena finished first clocking one hour six minutes and 31 seconds, while Kiran Tiwari ran away with the honours in the female category in one hour 20 minute and 36 seconds.