

Seven Athletes Running 73.6 Kilometres. A Number India Can No Longer Run Past.

Fight Club India Foundation hosts a run on 27 June to highlight that 73.6% of all suicide deaths in India are men (NCRB, 2024)

BANGALORE, 27 June 2026: On 27 June, seven athletes will run 73.6 kilometres in Bangalore, at Cubbon Park at 6am. The distance is not arbitrary. 73.6% of all suicide deaths in India are men, according to the National Crime Records Bureau's 2024 report. The run is to build on ground engagement and create awareness about the statistics on male suicide rates in India.

Some of India's highest-performing men and women, people who have built their identity around physical strength and competitive achievement, are publicly acknowledging that men's mental health is in crisis. Deepak manages HYROX India. Manikantan and Prashant qualified for HYROX Stockholm World Championship. Monnappa podiomed at HYROX and runs ultras. Rajalakshmi is 4th among Indian women at the Boston Marathon 2026.

The event is organised by Fight Club India Foundation, a Bangalore-based Section 8 not-for-profit that works on increasing help-seeking behaviour among men through peer-led, non-clinical community experiences. The 73.6km run is open to the public: community members can join any athlete leg, running 3, 5, 7, or 10km, and self-track on Strava.

The athletes

The lineup brings together athletes from India's competitive fitness and endurance communities, each running an approximately 10.5km segment:

- **Deepak Raj:** CEO, Yoska; Head of IRONMAN India and HYROX India
- **Manikantan Narayanan:** Fastest Indian Mixed Doubles team at HYROX Bangalore; qualified for HYROX World Championships, Stockholm
- **Prashant Paliwal:** Co-founder, Nuvie; qualified for HYROX World Championships, Stockholm
- **Monnappa Bayavanda:** Ultra runner; podium finish at HYROX Bangalore; co-founder, BHIVE Workspace and PRFM
- **Prashanth Ponnappa:** Co-founder, Troop HQ, 5 times HYROX finisher, and a multi-sport player
- **Rajalakshmi Swaminathan:** Amateur runner; 4th among Indian women at the Boston Marathon 2026
- **Dharmendra D:** Amateur runner and professional running coach

All seven athletes start from Cubbon Park in staggered five-minute intervals, running simultaneously to the same finish point. The run closes with a community breakfast at Shookett's, Ulsoor.

Following the run, all seven athletes will recover at the Ultrahuman Performance Lab, emphasising the importance of recovery as a crucial aspect of mental health. It's not just about striving for better performance but also about embracing intentional rest days to support overall well-being.

With Powerplate, localised hot & cold therapy, compression therapy, decompression, massage guns, cold plunges, and infrared saunas, they get a proper recovery day post-run that helps them fully rejuvenate.

Why this run

India's gender paradox around suicide is well-documented. Women report higher rates of diagnosed depression and anxiety. Men account for 73.6% of all suicide deaths. The gap is not biological. It is cultural, behavioural, and deeply social: men in India have fewer socially sanctioned pathways to express emotional difficulty, fewer spaces to seek help, and fewer peer models who normalise doing so.

Existing mental health infrastructure, helplines, clinical services, awareness campaigns, has not closed this gap. Fight Club India's work is upstream of crisis: building the peer conditions and community permission structures that make help-seeking possible before men reach breaking point.

The 73.6km run is a public act of acknowledgement from people who are culturally coded as strong. High-performance athletes, founders, coaches choosing to put a number on their backs and run it is a statement about what strength actually looks like.

In their own words

"I hope what matters isn't how many people show up for the run, but how far the message travels. We've come a long way as a society, therapy is accepted now in ways it wasn't before. But the stats tell us we haven't come far enough. Sometimes it starts with something as simple as asking someone: are you okay? Do you have people around you? That's what I want men to take from this."

Deepak Raj, CEO Yoska, Head of IRONMAN India and HYROX India

"Running together also means suffering together. If we can talk about a knee injury so openly, there is room for emotional injuries to be spoken of. The running community can provide a safe space for it."

Manikantan Narayanan, athlete

"I don't really talk to people about what I'm going through. But I don't think that makes it right, and I don't think showing emotion makes anyone weak. Most people actually feel closer to someone when they open up. The misconception is that you're weak if you show something. You're not. You're just going through it, like everyone does. Man, woman, doesn't matter."

Prashanth Ponnappa, co-founder Troop, athlete



"I want men to know: you can start small with sharing, and it will cascade into building trust for other things in life."

Dharmendra D, amateur runner and professional running coach, athlete

"Social issues that are considered 'women's issues' are not just what women have to deal with, but need active participation from all. Similarly, 'men's issues' also need women to show up"

Rajalakshmi Swaminathan, 4th among Indian women at the Boston Marathon 2026

"I've had some of my most honest conversations on a run. You're not making eye contact, you're just moving, and somehow that makes it easier to say the things you'd otherwise bottle up. Manning up shouldn't mean suppressing things. It should mean being brave enough to say I need help."

Monnappa Bayavanda, co-founder BHIVE Workspace and PRFM

"Fight Club is socialising men's mental health conversations like it's never been done before. When men take active ownership of caring for their mental health, it creates a ripple effect out to their partners, families, and communities. In a country like ours, Fight Club aims to be quietly revolutionary."

Ayesha Syed Asif, Founder, Fight Club India Foundation

EVENT DETAILS

- **Date:** 27 June 2026
- **Start:** 5:45am briefing, 6:00am first athlete start, Cubbon Park, Bangalore
- **Format:** Seven athletes each running approximately 10.5km simultaneously, starting from Cubbon Park in staggered five-minute intervals, converging at the same finish point. Community members may join any athlete (3, 5, 7, or 10km) for ₹736, self-tracked on Strava.
- **Close:** Community breakfast at Shookett's, Ulsoor on finish
- **Open to:** All genders

About fight club India foundation

Fight Club India Foundation is a Bangalore-based Section 8 not-for-profit incorporated in 2026. Its work centres on shifting help-seeking behaviour among men in India through peer-led, non-clinical community experiences: round tables, movement sessions, workplace programmes, and public events. Fight Club's entry point is always social, never clinical. The Foundation ran its first community sessions in January 2025 and published its Ground Zero Report the same year, documenting early findings on what conditions allow men to engage honestly with their own mental health.

73.6% of all suicide deaths in India are men (NCRB, 2024). Fight Club exists because that number demands more than awareness. It demands a different kind of intervention.

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Notes to editors: High-resolution athlete photographs available on request. Accredited media are welcome at the event finish breakfast. All athlete quotes require sign-off confirmation before publication.