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## New hope on table tennis horizon Karnataka's Talented Cadet Boys And Girls Teams Aim Higher In New Year

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**Bengaluru:** Karnataka's cadet boys and girls teams set their sights on improved performances in the new year following impressive displays in the 78th Cadet and Sub-Junior Inter-State and National Table Tennis Championships held at Siliguri, West Bengal earlier this month.

The boys team claimed a silver medal in the team championship while the girls won the bronze. In the individual event, rising talent Sujan R Bharadwaj captured a silver to cap a successful run in the December 1-6 event.

"The boys performed well against strong rivals in Tamil Nadu. We were unfortunate to go



### BRIGHT PROSPECTS

down in the final but the team showed good potential to do well in future," the team's coach

**Aloysius Sa-gayaraj** told TOI. Comprising India No. 4 Sujan, India No. 6 Aakash KJ, Srikanth Kashyap PV and Vishnu Bhat, the state boys went down 0-3 to a formidable Tamil Nadu team comprising the country's top two players. "Three of our boys — Aakash, Srikanth and Sujan — study in the same school and are childhood friends and so the coordination was quite good. I am proud of all four boys and I am sure they will improve. I want them to continue playing the game," he said.

Incidentally, the Sri Kumaran Children's Home trio then went on to win the gold medal in the 11Even Sports Inter-School National Championship at the Sama Indoor Complex in Vadodara.

"The Nationals was an enjoyable experience. This silver medal

**ONES TO WATCH:** The Karnataka cadet boys and girls teams, winners of a silver and bronze respectively in the 78th Cadet and Sub-Junior Inter-State and National Table Tennis Championships in Siliguri, West Bengal. (From left) Sahana H Murthy, Vishnu Bhat, Aakash KJ, Karruna G, Sujan R Bharadwaj and Srikanth Kashyap PV. The girls team also included Saathwika S Rao and Ishani Harish (below, right with coach Veeresh Matpathi)



The Sri Kumaran Children's Home junior table tennis team, winners of the 11Even Sports Inter-School National Championship



motivates us to put up a better fight against Tamil Nadu next time," said Srikanth. "The final was tough because we were a bit nervous. I am sure we will get another chance," added Vishnu.

"After our side went down in the team event, I was more determined to do well in the individual championship," said Sujan,

who ultimately fell to Uttar Pradesh's Divyansh Srivatsava in the title clash. "Overall, it's a good feeling to come back with a medal," said Aakash.

Meanwhile, the girls team comprising Saathwika S Rao, Ishani Harish, Sahana H Murthy and Karruna G — coached by Veeresh Matpathi — returned home

with a bronze after falling to New Delhi 0-3 in the semifinals.

"We went down to a good team that had the India No. 1. It was not easy," said Sahana, before Karruna chipped in: "But it was a fun event for us, as we enjoyed bonding in the team hotel. We are happy with our effort and hope to carry on the good work."