

Future of Women's Wrestling in India: Pro Wrestling League's 2026 Comeback to Empower Female Wrestlers

Category: Business

written by News Mall | November 7, 2025



Indian wrestling is set for a major revival as the **Pro Wrestling League (PWL)** prepares to return in January 2026 – with a renewed focus on women's participation and professional opportunities for female wrestlers.



Announcement of Pro Wrestling League 2026 at a Press Conference in New Delhi

PWL Returns Under New Structure

After a gap of several years, the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) has officially announced the comeback of the Pro Wrestling League, this time under its direct supervision to ensure greater transparency and financial discipline.

Each of the six participating franchises will include nine wrestlers – five Indian and four foreign athletes. Significantly, four of these will be women wrestlers, competing in the 53 kg, 57 kg, 62 kg, and 76 kg categories. **Mr. Dayaan Farooqui, Promoter and Chairman of PWL** said, *"The Pro Wrestling League 2026 marks the beginning of a bold new era for Indian wrestling. Our vision is to create a league that celebrates both tradition and modern sport, where homegrown talent competes shoulder to shoulder with the world's best. We want to make wrestling not just India's pride, but its next big sporting phenomenon, inspiring millions to believe that champions are made right here, on our own soil."*

A Turning Point for Women's Wrestling

The 2026 edition marks a paradigm shift – taking women's wrestling beyond government tournaments and positioning it within a commercial, televised, and league-based format.

This provides women wrestlers with

- Sustained competition and exposure alongside top international talent.
- Financial growth and sponsorship opportunities, previously missing from the ecosystem.
- Media visibility and fan engagement, helping build a stronger following for women's wrestling in India.
- Industry experts believe that PWL could do for wrestling what IPL did for cricket – creating a space where athletes become national icons and the sport becomes a household name.

Rising Participation at the Grassroots

The timing couldn't be better. Across India, from Haryana to Maharashtra, more young girls are taking up wrestling – inspired by the success of champions like Geeta Phogat, Sakshi Malik, and Vinesh Phogat. Government initiatives such as Khelo India Women and growing OTT storytelling around sportswomen have built momentum for a cultural shift in how female athletes are viewed. In WPL 2026, top national and international women wrestlers will participate and till last season more than 25 Countries player participated in PWL.

Challenges Still Remain

However, the journey is not without hurdles. Access to quality training facilities in rural belts, societal restrictions, and

a lack of consistent media coverage continue to challenge women's wrestling in India. Experts also stress the need for private investment and audience engagement to make the women's segment commercially sustainable. **Mr. Sumit Dubey, COO of PWL** adds, *"The Pro Wrestling League is being built on the foundation of professionalism, opportunity, and scale. Our focus is to create a seamless ecosystem; from athlete development to franchise management, that attracts the best talent, brands, and fans alike. This is not just about organizing a league; it's about building a sports movement that uplifts every stakeholder, from the young wrestler in an akhada to the sponsor investing in India's sporting future."*

The Road Ahead

If the PWL's women's format succeeds, it could redefine wrestling in India – turning female wrestlers from state-level competitors into national sporting brands. In essence, India stands at the brink of a revolution in wrestling – one where the roar of the crowd at the next PWL may echo not just for men, but for the fierce and fearless women who step into the mat.

Key Facts – Pro Wrestling League 2026 (Proposed Format)

Launch: January 2026, New Delhi

Franchises: 6

Total Wrestlers per Team: 9 (5 Indian, 4 foreign)

Women's Categories: 53 kg, 57 kg, 62 kg, 76 kg

Supervising Body: Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)

Goal: Equal representation and professional platform for women wrestlers

