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Visa Complications Prevent VI Athlete Malique Smith From Competing at World Indoor Championships in China

Malique Smith of the U.S. Virgin Islands was forced to miss the 2025 World Athletics Indoor Championships in Nanjing due to visa delays, preventing him from competing in the men's 400m. He now turns focus to future events as he continues training.

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USVI Athlete Malique Smith.

Malique Smith, a talented sprinter from the U.S. Virgin Islands, was unable to participate in the prestigious World Athletics Indoor Championships held in Nanjing, China, due to visa complications that hindered his travel.

According to the Virgin Islands Track and Field Federation, Smith, who had been preparing to compete in the men's 400-meter race, was forced to withdraw from the competition after his travel documentation failed to process in time.

The championships, which took place from March 21 to 23, brought together elite athletes from across the globe. Smith was expected to represent the Virgin Islands on the world stage, continuing his pursuit of excellence in track and field. However, the unexpected visa delay halted those plans.

Visa-related issues are not uncommon in global sports, often creating barriers for athletes traveling to compete in international meets. Smith's missed opportunity in Nanjing adds to the broader conversation about the need for more efficient, athlete-friendly travel clearance procedures—especially for those representing smaller nations, the VITFF said.

Despite the disappointment, Smith remains focused and committed to his athletic career, according to the release. He has already resumed training with his sights set on upcoming regional and international meets.

The VITFF continues to encourage all local athletes to ensure they are officially registered with the organization. Registration can be completed through the federation's [website](#).