

**Government of India
Department of Sports
Office of Secretary (Sports)**

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**REPORT ON VISIT OF UNION SECRETARY (SPORTS) CUM-DIRECTOR GENERAL, SAI TO
GUWAHATI, ASSAM ON 3RD AND 4TH JANUARY, 2017**

I made a visit to Assam to discuss development of sports in Assam. During my visit, I assessed preparedness of Assam for holding the FIFA U-17 Football World Cup and the Himalayan Region Sports Festival (HRSF) and visited the venues. I also visited Sports Authority of India (SAI) Regional Centre, Guwahati, and Lakshmibai National Institute of Physical Education (LNIPE) North Eastern Regional Centre (NERC), Guwahati, and held discussions with the local incharge. I was accompanied by Shri Onkar Kedia, Joint Secretary Sports, Shri Subhash Basumatary, Regional Director SAI RC, Guwahati, and other officers of the Government of India, Department of Sports, and SAI.

3RD JANUARY

A. FIELD VISITS

(a) My first visit was to the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium Football Ground for FIFA U-17. I discussed the preparedness of the venue for competitions with Shri Ajay Tewari, Commissioner & Secretary, Department of Sports & Youth Welfare, Government of Assam and his team of officers. They apprised me that the ground has to be made FIFA compliant and handed over to FIFA by March, 2017. The overall progress is satisfactory. It was also decided that this ground will host the Football matches under the HRSF too. The Ground also has a track around it and therefore the Athletic events under HRSF can be held here.

This was followed by discussions with the officers of the Assam Government on how to make Assam the sports capital of North East India. During the discussions the following salient points emerged :

- i. Indian Sports is at the crossroads today. Though the country is demographically well endowed, the country is yet to become a world beater. The meteoric rise of Indian cricket proves that India has the mettle to become a frontrunner in Sports. The success of Cricket, however, has not been replicated in any other Sports. Sporadic sparks of sporting brilliance at the international level have reinforced the position of India as a giant slayer. However, such success have come not because of any system but inspite of it.
- ii. While winning medals in Olympics is the ultimate objective of all Sporting nations, this cannot happen overnight. It is essential to converge efforts of all stakeholders and actors in Indian Sports through a single Sports Plan with clearly defined objectives and demarcation of responsibilities between all stake holders, i.e., the Central Government including the Sports Authority of India, the State Government, The National and State Sports Federations, NGOs, PSUs, Corporate Sector, Sports Industry, Education System (Schools, Institutions, Colleges and Universities), etc. The Plan should have measurable outcomes and work towards the common cause of sports development in India. This will avoid multiplicity of the same tasks and instead of each entity working in silos, there will be a

convergence of efforts, thereby leading to optimum utilisation of resources and effective outcome.

- iii. It is felt that while there should be an overarching National Sports Vision, the States will have to formulate compatible State visions which can synergise with and feed the National vision. Either State Government or Central Government can play the anchoring and catalysing role, but this has to be done professionally. This Vision is envisaged to make sports attractive enough as a sustainable career alternative to attract talent from all economic strata of society and put in place a uniform system throughout the country from beginning to end to prepare medal winners by creating a large pool of qualified and competent coaches who will emerge through a system of training and capacity building.
- iv. With regard to achieving excellence in Sports, the first priority would be to increase the number of athletes qualifying and participating in the Olympics. The next step would be to participate and do well in the Olympics. Once this is achieved, with some more effort, the chances of winning medals in Olympics can be increased manifold. Therefore, focus should be on such sports disciplines which have low cost of training and low level of competition both at continental level and at global level.
- v. While much of Sports administration at the ground level is with the Sports Federations, the Government can identify and nurture sporting talents. Identification and grooming of talent is a money making enterprise, especially in Football in Europe. The same method can be adopted in India as well. A welcome change is that now, professional players can participate in the Olympics as well.
- vi. Each State, should, therefore, set up a Task Force to thrash out modalities for sports development through a focussed and result oriented action plan. For Global competition, each State should identify priority sports disciplines, preferably limited to four and set up National Level Sports academies for these Sports disciplines. Such academies should have an all India character, akin to the IITs/IIMs. Sports disciplines selected should be such where the State has core strength and a sustainable supply chain. Ideally, 3 individual sports disciplines and one team games can be adopted so that a focussed and result approach, with measurable outcomes, and well defined timelines, can be adopted. The Academies should have state of the art infrastructure with complete specialised support in terms of Sports Science, Sports Medicine, Sports Psychology, Sports Nutrition, etc. Latest techniques of Talent Identification (TID) and Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) to groom raw talent and mould them into Olympic podium material need to be incorporated in functioning of the Academies and they should be funded commensurately. Sports in the country should progress from community sports development, through broadbasing to achieving international excellence. This should cover a total period of 12 years covering short term (4 years), middle term (8 years) and long term (12 years) approach. Children should be evaluated scientifically and groomed accordingly.
- vii. Besides, Sports is an interesting sector which gives exposure of education, event management, sports industry, sports science, social development, national integration. It has tremendous potential for growth in the country. It is, therefore, imperative that a robust system with adequate emphasis on all relevant parallels and verticals, involving all stakeholders and actors, is put in place to achieve the objective of Sports development in India.
- viii. Assam is a sports powerhouse and also a hub for the North Eastern Region. It hosts the North Eastern Regional Centre of the Sports Authority of India (SAI). It has co-hosted the 12th South Asian Games (SAG), 2016, with Meghalaya and is gateway to the North Eastern Region. It is one of the venues for FIFA Under-17 Football World Cup, 2017 and also slated to host the 1st Himalayan Region Sports Festival (HRSF). Therefore, development of

Sports in Assam would pave way for development of Sports in the entire North Eastern Region, where Sports is a way of life and which has produced a number of eminent Sportspersons.

Thereafter, I visited the Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Indoor Stadium, IG Athletic Stadium Complex, Sajusarai. The infrastructure in the Stadium was in good condition and it was decided that Boxing matches under the HRSF will be held in this stadium.

(b) My next visit was to the Squash Centre at R.G.Baruah Sports Complex, Nehru Stadium. The Squash Centre is a State-of-the-Art centre with excellent squash courts. Accordingly, squash competitions under the HRSF will be held at this Centre.

I also assessed the condition of the football field at Nehru Stadium. The field is not FIFA compliant yet. Officers of the Assam Government apprised me that FIFA officials have visited this ground which is slated to host FIFA U-17 Football World Cup matches and the ground is being made FIFA compliant under guidance of the FIFA. It was decided that this ground can be one of the practice venues for HRSF.

Thereafter, I evaluated the condition of the Desh Bhakta Tarun Ram Phukan Indoor Hall in the complex and found it suitable for holding Judo competitions under the HRSF.

(c) My next visit was to SAI Regional Centre, Guwahati. Here I visited each of the facilities existing in the complex.

It was decided that upgradation of the SAI Football Field which is being retrofitted with underground drainage and sprinkler systems should be completed expeditiously so that it is in a state of readiness before the HRSF. It was also decided that though the present proposal is to have lighting of 300 lux as required for training, it needs to be upgraded to 1200 lux, being the minimum requirement for holding international matches as well. It was further decided that this field can be one of the practice venues for the HRSF.

I noticed that the SAI Multipurpose Hall does not have any name as is the case with other Indoor halls in the city. I therefore proposed that this hall can be named as TIKHOR Hall and inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam. A proposal may be put up by SAI RC, Guwahati for the purpose.

I found that the weightlifting facility at the complex was adequate for practice purposes and it was decided that this facility can be an alternate facility for practice purposes during the HRSF.

(d) My last field visit for the day was to the Bhogeshwari Phukananai Indoor Hall. This hall has excellent facilities for holding both competitions and practice sessions for Weightlifting and hence it was decided that this will be the venue for Weightlifting under HRSF.

B. MEETING WITH HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER OF ASSAM

I had a meeting with Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, where Hon'ble Sports Minister of Assam, Chief Secretary of Assam, Commissioner & Secretary, Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of Assam, Joint Secretary (Sports) and other senior officers of the Government of India and the State Government of Assam were present.

I briefed the Hon'ble CM of the field visits that I had made, discussions I had had with officers of the Government of Assam and observations that I had made. Both the Hon'ble CM and the Chief Secretary urged for more support of the Government of India for development of Sports in Assam. Holding of the 1st HRSF was and setting up of TIKHOR park was also discussed. The following decisions emerged from the discussions :

S.No.	Issue Discussed/ Observation Made	Decisions taken/agreed to	Action by
1.	Development of Sports in States, including Assam	Assam can take a lead in setting up of Task Force for identification of priority sports disciplines and setting up of National Level Academies. The State Government (SG) can identify infrastructure that can be readily utilised for the purpose. The Government of India, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Department of Sports (DOS) will support the endeavour to the extent feasible. PSUs willing to invest in Sports development as part of their CSR requirements can be roped in to provide additional support. SG of Assam can identify PSUs having dominant presence and stake in the region for the purpose. DOS can also consider opening a branch of the NS NIS, Patiala, in Assam for the identified Sports disciplines.	State Govt. of Assam, MYAS, and SAI
		Assam has excellent sports infrastructure. While some of them can be utilised for setting up Sports academies for focussed sports disciplines, for non-priority sports disciplines, the infrastructure can be made open to the public on payment basis so as to get the community involved in sports, improve the sports culture and also generate revenue on a sustainable basis so that each infrastructure becomes a self sustaining entity. In addition, regular events should also be held at these venues view a view to involve the community in sporting activities and improve the sports culture across the population.	State Govt. of Assam
		Big events in Assam will make it a destination for Sports in the North East, help improve Sports culture and also provide incentivise development and maintenance of sports infrastructure thereby giving a much needed fillip to sports development in the North East. Therefore, Assam should tap into opportunities to hold big ticket events.	State Govt. of Assam, MYAS

	World Women Boxing is slated to be held in India with participation of about 400 Boxers from 50 countries. Boxing Federation has approached the DOS for potential venues. They can be asked to consider venues in Assam as an option.	
	Efforts are on in the Government of India at the highest level to integrate sports and physical education with the academic education system at schools, colleges, institutions and Universities. It is imperative that as in strong sporting nations like the USA, college sports needs to be given a strong fillip as it helps mature talent identification and forms the feeder for high performance athletes. The Association of Indian Universities (AIU) has a limited footprint in this area. Therefore, Assam can take the initiative to bolster college sports through inter-college competitions.	State Govt. of Assam
	Basic sports infrastructure in the form of playgrounds can be developed using the MGNREGS funds. This will generate employment as per the objectives of the MGNREGA and also help develop playgrounds in all 26000 villages of the State.	State Govt. of Assam
	A National Playing Fields Association of India (NPFAI) has been set up by the DOS. States can form their own Playing Field associations. All playgrounds can be registered with the State Playing field Associations which will be integrated with the NPFAI database. This action will have three advantages, viz, it will be difficult to divert the fields for other purposes once they are legally registered, it will provide a platform for longterm athlete development by forming a catchment area for budding talent, and it will help connect the community through regular sports activities. Physical Education Teachers (PETs) or even subject teachers of nearby schools can be trained to act as coaches in these fields. Assam may form its own State Playing Field Association.	State Govt. of Assam
	Sports Science is a big sector. The National Sports University (NSU), Manipur, being set up by the DOS has 13 Departments under 4 schools. However, all the Departments will not be located in Manipur. There will be a number of outlying campuses. Few of these campuses can be set up in Assam. The DOS proposes to set up 6 sports science departments and 6 sports medicine departments in the country. Chief Secretary, Assam suggested that one Sports Science Department can be set up in Dibrugarh University and one Sports Medicine	State Govt. of Assam

		Department can be set up in Guwahati Medical College. It was suggested that a proposal in this regard may be submitted by the Goa.	
		Activities of SAI, Regional Centre, may be sped up especially in areas like Tinsukia, Lakhimpur and Kokrajhar. State Government would extend all support possible for the purpose.	State Govt. of Assam/ SAI RC, Guwahati
		Possibility of sports infrastructure created by State Government that can be handed over to SAI for managing and running its Sports Promotional Schemes in collaboration with the State Government may be explored.	State Govt. of Assam
		A Sports Coordination council may be set up under the Chairmanship of Sports Minister, Government of Assam to ensure better coordination of the State Government with SAI. SAI representatives may be special invitees in meetings held by the Sports Authority of Assam. Similarly, representatives from the Sports Department of Government of Assam or from the Sports Authority of Assam may be special invitees in meetings of SAI.	State Govt. of Assam/ SAI RC, Guwahati
2.	Holding of the 1st Himalayan Region Sports Festival (HRSF)	Venues for holding of HRSF have been inspected and finalised (Details given at Annexure). It is proposed to give the HRSF a character of a proper competition in the true spirit of the Olympic Movement and follow all relevant rules. Therefore, should be called Games and not Festival. Can be called friendly Games as with the Commonwealth Games.	DOS, MYAS
		Nepal and Bhutan had agreed to participate in the HRSF proposed to be held in 2016. NOC from the MEA has been received for participation of Myanmar and Thailand in the Games. Efforts will be made to include Afghanistan as well.	DOS, MYAS
		The Games should not entail high financial implications as sports infrastructure for all the Sports disciplines are already available in Guwahati. Apart from expenditure related to actual conduct of the games, main expenditure will be on overlays and transportation of equipment. The Games are envisaged to be a small-scale SAG as 6 countries expected to participate (including Afghanistan) against 8 in the SAG. However, number of sports disciplines will be 8 against 23 in the SAG. The number of medal events in each sports discipline will also be kept to	DOS, MYAS/ State Govt. of Assam

		manageable limits. Domestic leg of the Games will be eliminated and selection of India teams will be confined to the Himalayan States. Accordingly, Assam Government may revise the estimates submitted by them	
		Dates of the HRSF will be finalised on the basis of the venue visits and consultations with the other stakeholders. The window for the Games is 15 th March to 19 th April, 2017.	DOS, MYAS
3.	Setting up of TIKHOR Park	Tikhor Park project is envisaged to be a high visibility project to help recreate and endure the memories and legacies of the SAG, 2016. Present concept of the park entails expenditure of Rs. 1 crore. The park is proposed to be developed around a statue of Tikhor on a pedestal. It is felt that a mini – museum, within an elevated structure on which the statue will stand, can be set up to capture unique points of the SAG, 2016 for display. For the purpose, pre-fabricated dome structures can be considered due to easy installability, durability and ease of maintenance. Care should be taken to ensure that height of the statue is optimum to ensure easy visibility from approaching vehicles. To conceptualise the design and make the project attractive, services of experts, including artists of prominence may be engaged. It is expected that the new concept would entail a total financial implication of Rs.1.50 crore. Accordingly, a detailed proposal may be submitted by the Govt. of Assam to the DOS for consideration of additional funding.	State Govt. of Assam

4th JANUARY

VISIT OF LAKSHMIBAI NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION, NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL CENTRE, TEPESIA

I visited the LNIPE North Eastern Regional Centre (NERC), Tepesia, on 4th January, 2017. After the welcome address by Dean, LNIPE, NERC, I took this opportunity to address the students of the Institute and try to infuse enthusiasm and imbibe a spirit of discipline and focus among them. I reminded the students that Sports is a dynamic and rising sector with numerous verticals and parallels and assured them that they had chosen a good career option by choosing an eminent institute in the form of the LNIPE.

I exhorted them to make the most of the facilities, infrastructure and knowledgeable faculties in the Institute and to grab every opportunity to make the most of resources available in order to acquire requisite domain knowledge and achieve excellence, emphasize on quality education as against mere degree acquisition, enjoy their studies in order to imbibe the knowledge being imparted, and be prepared to take on leadership roles in various capacities, especially as

coaches and Sports managers, and as a consequence, honing of essential skills during their 4-year stint in the Institute was of utmost importance. to harness the true potential of Sports, which holds a very crucial position in society.

I reminded all that Sports is arguably the only activity which demands marshalling of both physical and mental faculties in order to achieve excellence and emphasised the role of Sports in confidence building, character development, social development, community building and National building.

I advised the students to make their learning experience a holistic one so that as Sports leaders, they could address the problems ailing Sports in the country and put in place requisite systems that would help the country achieve excellence in Sports

I advised the Dean to explore the option of identifying components of the present B.Ped course common with other relevant courses like coaching and Sports Management and combine them into the 4-year curriculum so that on completion of the same, the students would have expanded their knowledge base and also would be more employable.

Thereafter, I visited the facilities at the Institute and found that the football field is being upgraded. It was decided that expeditious action on development of Football Ground with Change rooms and Archery Range has to be taken by the LNIPE, NERC from the budget available with LNIPE, Gwalior. LNIPE, Gwalior may be instructed accordingly by the Department. Archery and Fencing under HRSF may be held at the facilities of the Institute.



(Injeti Srinivas)

Secretary (Sports)-cum-DG, SAI

17.01.2017

Details of venues inspected, Match Venues finalised and probable practice venues identified

Sports Disciplines	Match Venues	Probable Practice Venues
Archery	LNIFE, NERC, Tepesia	LNIFE, NERC, Tepesia
Athletics	Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium, Sajusarai.	SAI, Paltan Bazar
Boxing	Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Indoor Stadium, IG Athletic Stadium Complex, Sajusarai.	SAI MPH, Paltan Bazar
Football	Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium, Sajusarai.	Nehru Stadium Football Ground, SAI Football Ground, Railways Football Ground
Judo	Desh Bhakta Tarun Ram Phukanani Indoor Hall	SAI MPH, Paltan Bazar
Squash	Squash Centre, R.G. Baruah Sports Complex, Nehru Stadium	Squash Centre, R.G. Baruah Sports Complex, Nehru Stadium, SAI Paltan Bazar
Weightlifting	Bhogeswari Phukanani Indoor Hall	Bhogeswari Phukanani Indoor Hall
Fencing	LNIFE, NERC, Tepesia	LNIFE, NERC, Tepesia

Assam Government may identify other suitable practice venues. Steps may also be taken to make the venues ready for the Games well in time.