



FIH President Tayyab Ikram all praise for Odisha government

Rourkela, January 14: International Hockey Federation (FIH) president Tayyab Ikram was all praise for the efforts that the Odisha Government has put in to organize its successive World Cup.

Speaking to reporters during a full house Press Conference at the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium on Sunday, Tayyab Ikram wondered how this World Cup was transforming into a bigger and bigger event.

“Let me congratulate and express my sincere gratitude to Odisha government, government of India, leadership of Odisha government, especially Chief Minister Mr Naveen Patnaik for his dynamic leadership. Global hockey is blessed that he prioritized the sport in Odisha and put a lot of investment,” Tayyab Ikram told the reporters.

According to Tayyab Ikram, Odisha is not only building the infrastructure, but converting it into a smart way that it now has an impact on the community of Odisha.

“It is not only a competition, not just a mega event, but it is transforming the lives of local community which I felt during the opening ceremony and during my last two days here (in Rourkela). Even on non-India matches the turn-up at the stadium is a great thing which made me realise what hockey could do,” he said.

He felt it was not the end result of a match, but end result of sustainable development and the way hockey was transforming different communities and the engagement level.

Putting aside all doubts and burying all controversies, Tayyab Ikram said seating capacity at Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium had been raised from 20,000 to 21,800 seats. “You don't have this 'seating' capacity anywhere in the world. I have not seen such infrastructure, such facilities for a tournament,” he declared.

Talking about future of hockey in Odisha, the FIH President said there was a proposal from Hockey India about another tournament and they will seriously ponder over it.