



Odisha Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik, Union Sports Minister Shri Kiren Rijju launch

Khelo India University Games to be held in Bhubaneswar

~The inaugural edition will witness over 4000 athletes from 100 Universities across India take part in 17 different disciplines during the KIUG to be held from 22 February 2020 to 1 March 2020 at KIIT University, Bhubaneswar ~

Bhubaneswar, 6 January 2020: With a vision to promote culture and excellence in competitive sports, the first edition of Khelo India University Games was announced today by the Honourable Chief Minister, Government of Odisha, Shri. Naveen Patnaik along with Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal, Honourable minister for Human Resources and Development, Govt of India, Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Minister of Steel and Honourable Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports (I/C) Shri. Kiren Rijju.

Odisha State Government will host the prestigious event from 22 February 2020 to 1 March 2020 at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) University in Bhubaneswar in association with Sports Authority of India, Association of Indian Universities, KIIT University as the host university, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the National Sports Federation (NSFs).

Khelo India University Games will witness over 4000 athletes from 100 Universities across India vying for top honours in 17 different disciplines namely archery, athletics, boxing, fencing, judo, swimming, weightlifting, wrestling, badminton, basketball, football, hockey, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, rugby and kabaddi.

The launch ceremony of the KIUG today was also attended by Shri Arun Kumar Sahoo, Minister for Higher Education, Govt. of Odisha, Shri Tusharkanti Behera, Honourable Minister for Sports and Youth Services, Govt of Odisha and Shri Achyuta Samanta, Founder KIIT University and Honourable Member of Parliament. Top athletes and national hockey players too were present at the ceremony.

“I am truly delighted to announce that the first edition of the Khelo India University Games will be held in Bhubaneswar; a city which has gained the repute of being the Sports Capital of India. I commend the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and Sports Authority of India for taking this initiative of having an annual sports event of this magnitude at the University level. I am sure the



true spirit of sportsmanship will be showcased during this event. Odisha State Government and KIIT University will ensure all the participants will have a memorable experience during the event," Honourable Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik, expressed during the launch.

"KIIT University is equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure that will make competing a great experience and I am hopeful the participating universities will enjoy the hospitality here and also experience our rich culture, heritage and white sand beaches in Odisha," he added.

Honourable Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports (I/C), Government of India, Shri. Kiren Rijiju, believes the Khelo India University Games will strengthen Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambition to make India a super power in sports.

"The Khelo India University Games is yet another empowering initiative of Government of India that hopes to not only give a platform to young students to showcase their talent in sports but in the long run it will develop a culture to pursue sports at this level and eventually contribute to the ultimate goal of topping the medal tally in events like the Asian Games and Olympic Games," Shri. Kiren Rijiju said at the launch ceremony.

"I invite every sports-loving and talented young student to grab this opportunity and begin his or her journey towards excellence. Playing sport is also a great way to build one's character and have a fitter body and mind," he added.

Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Minister of Steel, reflected the Government's ambition of seeing the tri-colour fly high at the 2024 and 2028 Olympic Games. "I am very delighted that the first edition of Khelo India University Games is being hosted in my home state. The people of Odisha are very passionate about sports and I am sure an event of this scale will inspire the future generation to take up sports as a career. These initiatives taken up by the Government under the leadership of our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will definitely help mould the future of budding sports stars of India and I am confident these initiatives will help the country win more medals at the upcoming Olympic Games in 2024 and 2028."

Dutee Chand, one of the most celebrated athletes from Odisha, was also present at the launch ceremony event to unveil this inaugural edition's logo and Games jersey.

"This is a great platform for athletes who tend to give up sports after school due to pressure of studies or lack of events to take part after age-group/ junior and sub-junior events. A multi-discipline University Games will be a great fixture in the annual sports calendar, and it will give new hope to those who want to excel in sports. I thank the Government of India and SAI for taking up this initiative," stated Dutee who also hails from the KIIT University.