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Sports Minister lauds Odia girl Sumitra Nayak for landing India its first international victory in Rugby

- **India clinches bronze in Asian Rugby Championship (Div 1)**

Bhubaneswar, 24th June, 2019: Odisha is still basking with pride as our 17 year old Sumitra Nayak, fondly called Rugby Rani, who hails from Jajpur, brought India its first first-ever international 15s victory in Rugby on Saturday. Sumitra landed Indian Rugby women’s team a historic win against Team Singapore (21-19) and created their first ever international win in Manila to finish third in the Asian Rugby Championship (Div-1). ***Hon’ble Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik*** had congratulated Rugby India women’s team on their historic and very first win and said “India has truly arrived in the game and the future looks very bright for our girls. Wish them the best.”

Commending the team on their phenomenal win, ***Minister for Sports and Youth Services, Electronics and Information Technology, Government of Odisha, Tusharkanti Behera*** said, “The women have shown the way. They have created history for the country and we are elated with their performance against Singapore. They have achieved international milestones with their continuous training and rigorous pursuit. Sumitra has always been a state pride and in this tournament has proved yet again that Rugby is her life. We extend our hearty wishes to her and the team in their journey ahead.”

For India, ranked 47th in the world, defeating Singapore ranked 33rd was no mean feat when India scrum-half Sumitra Nayak kicked a penalty and brought triumph for the nation in a captivating match. Led by by captain Vahbiz Bharucha, the Indian team that included seven Odia players, had under gone specialised training for two weeks at the National Training camp in Bhubaneswar. The camp was supported by Rugby India, Department of Sports and Youth Services, Government of Odisha and KIIT.

Sumitra has earlier participated in the U-13 Women's Rugby World Cup, followed by the National Championship and the National School Games. She helped her team clinch bronze medal in the Asian Girls Rugby Sevens (U-18) held in Dubai.



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