



Sports and Youth Services,

Department Government of Odisha

Odisha plans ambitious program to take Hockey skills to elite level

- *To induct Boys program into its fold at its Hockey High Performance Centre*

Bhubaneswar, 7th August, 2020: After a good start with the inaugural Girls program of 30 trainee cadets capacity, Naval Tata Hockey Academy Odisha (NTHA O), the State's Hockey High Performance Centre (HPC) that was launched a year ago in Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar, is all set to induct 30 Boys in the coming months. This will strengthen its program across its talent pathway to bridge the gap between grassroots to an elite HPC and provide more opportunities to young and promising Hockey players from the State and Pan India who can then pursue their dream sport, excel at their game and bring laurels for the country.

"The HPC has ambitious program to take Hockey skills from its existing 10 grassroots centres & 3 Regional Development Centres (Bhubaneswar, Panposh & Sundergarh) to elite level over the next 3-5 years. The Boys program will have 30 Resident cadets from U -17, shared, **Sports Minister, Odisha Tusharkanti Behera**. He said, "We are seeing positive results in the Girls and are confident that the HPC will be able to provide similar highly focused and professional training to the Boys too. They all are young, skilful and have a natural flair for Hockey. We will evaluate the players individually at the HPC, and match their skills with appropriate training at the world-class facilities here in Bhubaneswar. Training early at a synthetic turf vis-a-vis on Grass pitch grounds will benefit these players immensely."

"The new initiative of Department of Sports and Youth Services, Govt. of Odisha, to set up a number of synthetic turfs in identified locations of Sundergarh will keep Odisha ahead of its hockey journey and nurturing of hockey talent from an early age group scenario only. These are very constructive times for hockey in the state and for the youth of the state'

Most of these young talents from Odisha are inspired by their heroes in the Sport who hail from in and around their region, including hockey legend Dilip Tirkey, Lazarus Barla, Birendra Lakra, Amit Rohidas to name a few and aspire to be like them and make the country proud at international levels.

"A professional High Performance Centre like Naval THA Odisha will provide advanced level training & exposure to the cadets under a resident program, ensure maximum participation of our cadets in National Sub-Junior & Junior Championships and works towards 360° development of the cadets" said **Rajiv Seth, Project Director, NTHA O**.

Elaborating on the scouting of boy cadets, he shared, "Scouting programs and various trials were carried out in Rourkela, North East, Assam, Coorg and other States with promising hockey talents. We have already shortlisted 100 boys for the final selection camp in Bhubaneswar in the age group of U-17 from Odisha and Pan India. We hope to maintain same 60-40% focus from State and Pan India unless we have more talent coming in from the state of Odisha, in which case the percentage mix can vary, Seth added.

On the Grassroots Centres, he said, "The Hockey HPC already has 10 Grassroot centres that are operational in Sundargarh & Sambalpur districts. They are divided two categories, Grassroot Promotion & Grassroot Elite. The former category will be instrumental in giving exposure to the youth of 7-10 years from promotion of hockey point of view and the later will be for youth of 10-14 years as elite talent which can easily be considered for RDC programs. Exceptional talent can even be picked for the HPC, directly. This will be a structured approach to yield great results in talent scouting at grassroot levels leading all the way up to an elite High Performance level. 16 Coaches have been appointed at these centres and provided Coaching Education Pathway programs to meet the demands of modern hockey".

We feel Naval Tata Hockey Academy Odisha is an Institution as it provides 360* development of the cadet who can further become self-sustained athletes with opportunities of sound career for themselves. What we have here in Kalinga Stadium Bhubaneswar, with efforts of Department of Sports and Youth Services, Odisha, and the enormous facilities that the state has already installed in such a short span is hard to comprehend. It is truly a sporting Capital of the nation, added Seth emphatically.

The Hockey High Performance Centre, Naval Tata Hockey Academy Odisha was launched by Government of Odisha in a unique partnership with Tata Steel and Tata Trusts for providing opportunities to grassroots talent to become professional hockey players and excel at National & International platforms. It has partnered with Olympian player Floris Jan Bovelanders to provide international level hockey training, along with life skills coaching, at the grassroots level as well as at the HPC at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

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