



Governor of Mizoram Shri Sreedharan Pillai hails the Khelo India epathshala Athlete Coaching and Education Programme organized by SAI and AIFF

March 24: The closing ceremony of the Khelo India epathshala Athlete Coaching and Education Programme in Football (Grassroots and Intermediate) took place via an online interaction on Wednesday. This three-month football training programme, which commenced on August 15 last year, was organized by Sports Authority of India in association with the All India Football Federation (AIFF).

Shri. P. S. Sreedharan Pillai, Hon'ble Governor of Mizoram, was the chief guest of the online closing ceremony. He was joined by a host of dignitaries including Kushal Das, General Secretary, AIFF, Shri Satya Narayan Meena, Sr Director, Khelo India, Dr. G. Kishore, Principal and RD, SAI LNCPE, Thiruvananthapuram, Isac Doru, Technical Director, AIFF, Dr. Pradip Dutta, Associate Professor and FIFA Instructor, SAI, LNCPE, Trivandrum, Rathin Saha, Manager, Grassroots, AIFF, Shailesh Karkera, AIFF Instructor, Mariano Dias, Youth Development, AIFF and Savio Medeira, Director, Coach Education, AIFF.

Inaugurated by Subrata Datta, Sr Vice President, AIFF and Kushal Das, the Khelo India epathshala program in football was intended for promotion of football culture in the country by providing training to players in a variety of football skills & techniques. This programme also addressed the youngsters' cognitive development with due regard to their living conditions and enable them to keep themselves fit and active during the difficult time of COVID pandemic.

Last year, the world was affected by the Covid pandemic and life everywhere came to a standstill. I applaud Sports Authority of India and the AIFF that they came up with this brilliant idea of organizing such a program which could help overcome the psychological distress of youth due to inactivity," mentioned Shri Pillai, Hon'ble Governor of Mizoram.

"Around 16000 participants registered through the web portal and uploaded video of the football activities and I congratulate the top achievers. This program will be a success even for other sports in India. As the country aims to be global leader in 21st century, it is necessary to excel in sports and physical fitness," he added.



Organising similar successful programs in collaboration with other national sports federations remains an important endeavour for the Government, informed Shri Satya Narayan Meena. “This was India’s first ever online Athlete and Coaching Programme. We launched the program last July and we reached a total of 22 sports, including para sports. SAI, along with the other stakeholders and federations, are committed in developing state of the art mechanism for the grassroots level. The goal is to make sports knowledge reach every part of the country. This programme will also have provision of various assessments,” he said.

The epathshala program for football, spearheaded by Isac Doru, was conducted with the help of a web portal developed exclusively for training grassroots and intermediate level football players. This enabled the players to participate, train and upload the files or videos to compete in various online football activities provided in the web portal with ease. Close to 1600 videos were uploaded and an evaluation committee headed by Doru identified 290 top achievers from the portal on November 15 last year.

The programme was open to all boys and girls aged below 18 years with an exemption to differently abled children and the entire training was conducted fully complying with the SOPs prescribed for prevention of Covid-19 pandemic.

“This innovative programme has become a landmark in the history of Indian football. This initiative by SAI and AIFF made lot of impact in the grassroots and intermediate level coaching. Of course, Director General of SAI, Shri Sandip Pradhan, was the brainchild in making this program very successful,” mentioned Dr. Kishore.

EOM