

rural, coastal and hilly areas of the country. The main objective of the scheme is to train talented and meritorious sportspersons in the age group of 12-18 years.

(iv) **SAI Training Centres (STC):** Under this scheme, talented youth in the age group of 14-21 years are given the option to join the scheme on residential or non-residential basis.

(v) **Centres of Excellence (COE):** The main objective of this scheme is to identify and train outstanding sportspersons in the age group of 12-25 years and above who are medal prospects for the country in international competitions.

Trainees under the above-mentioned schemes are provided with stipend, sports kit, accidental insurance as well as competition exposure.

Besides, extension centres of STC/SAG are also functioning for wider coverage of sportspersons from school and colleges.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, has been enacted, making elementary education a Fundamental Right, which, *inter/alia*, provides for

- (i) a play ground for each school;
- (ii) A part time instructor for physical education in upper primary school;
- (iii) Supply of play material, games and sports equipment, as required, to schools.

In terms of the provisions of the RTE Act, no school shall be established or recognized unless it fulfils the norms specified in the Schedule, attached to the Act.

Further, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has made it mandatory for all schools affiliated to it to provide one compulsory period for sports upto 10th class and two periods in a week for classes 11 and 12.

These measures are aimed at inculcating the spirit of sports in young children including those in the age group of 3-13 years.

Reviving interest in football

874. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of SKILL DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware the total absence of India from the Football World Cup scene, and whether Government proposes to revive interest of common Indian youth in football; and

(b) whether Government is contemplating plans to prepare Indian youngsters with a mission to get into the next Football World Cup and if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SKILL, DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL): (a) and (b) Sir, the primary responsibility for the development and promotion of a sports discipline rests with the concerned recognized National Sports Federation (NSF), which in the case of Football is the All India Football Federation (AIFF). The Government supplements the efforts of the NSFs by providing financial assistance for holding national/international sports events in India, participation of sportspersons/teams in international sports events abroad, training/coaching national level sportspersons/teams through Indian and foreign coaches procurement of equipment and consumables etc. as per agreed Long Term Development Plans. Financial assistance, at par with the NSFs, is given to Subroto Mukherjee Sports Education Society for organizing National Championships at the School level.

School Games Federation India (SGFI) has been recognized as an NSFs Football has been included as a discipline in the school games organized by SGFI and played in the categories under-14, under-17 and under-19 for boys and girls. Also, football is included in the University games, conducted by the Association of Indian Universities which has been recognized as a National Sports Promotion Organisation (NSPO) and is entitled to assistance at par with an NSF.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has also been extending support for improving the level of sports including Football through its various other Schemes like Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA) and Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme (USIS). Under RGKA, financial assistance of ₹ 1.75 crore will be provided for construction of a sports complex in each rural block of the country to cater to various sports disciplines including Football.

The Scheme of USIS provides for giving grants, *inter-alia*, for creation of sports infrastructure projects such as football/hockey turf/multi-purpose halls/ athletic tracks, etc. Under the scheme. State Governments, local civic bodies, Schools, Colleges, Universities and Sports Control Boards are eligible for assistance.

Apart from this, the Sports Authority India is running the following promotional schemes in which football is one the disciplines and training by experienced coaches with scientific back-up is provided to players to achieve excellence at national/international level:

- (1) National Sports Talent Scheme (NSTC)
- (2) Army Boys Sports Company (ABSC)

- (3) SAI Training Centre (STC)
- (4) Special Area Games (SAG)
- (5) Centre of Excellence (COE)

Government India has noticed with concern that the performance of the Indian team in football at the international level is not encouraging. With a view to generate interest among the Indian youngsters to play football, Government of India considered the proposal of AIFF and furnished the Declaration and Guarantees of the Government, sought by AIFF for their bid to host Under-17 FIFA World Cup in India in 2017.

In addition, the AIFF has set up 5 National Academics located one each at Bangalore, Kolkata, Mumbai and two in Goa to impart training to the children born in or after 1997. The players in these Academics come from all over India, selected from the various competitions including the National Championships conducted by AIFF. These AIFF Academics are full-time residential academies where the players undergo training under the supervision of Asian Football Confederation (AFC) accredited coaches.

Further, AIFF in conjunction with FIFA, has started a nation-wide Grassroots program aimed at boys and girls aged between 6-12 years of age. Currently the program is in operation in the States of Maharashtra, Manipur, Goa, Kerala, West Bengal and in the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The aim of the program is to get more boys and girls playing football and having fun in a safe, non-Competitive environment.

Sending students to North East to forge National unity

875. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of SKILL DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to send young students to the North East States from rest of India to forge national unity and to help younger generation get familiarised with each others special qualities and virtues; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to forge national unity and to help younger generation get familiarized with each other's special qualities and virtues, the Government launched a pilot Scheme "Youth-To-the-Edge" on 30th January, 2012, to showcase the paradise of North Eastern Region to the student youth of rest of the country. Under the Scheme, three adventure trails were identified for student youth enrolled as National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers to participate (2 in Arunachal Pradesh and 1 in Nagaland). Each trial was of 10 days' duration. The details regarding participation of