



Sports Ministry gives go-ahead to open 52 Khelo India Centres across 52 districts in Arunachal Pradesh; Padma Shri awardee Anshu Jamsenpa hails the move

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has approved the opening of 52 Khelo India Centres (KICs) in the state of Arunachal Pradesh with a budget estimate for annual expenditure of 5.2 crores in total of 52 districts. Setting up of KICs in Arunachal Pradesh is part of the larger plan of the Sports Ministry to open 1000 new KICs in all states and UTs, with at least one KIC in each district of the country. The decision was taken in June 2020.

The 52 centers in Arunachal Pradesh are part of 143 new centers approved in 7 states last week. With this, the total number of KICs in the country stands at 360. The KICs have been launched by the Sports Ministry in partnership with the state governments to ensure the availability of grassroots-level sports infrastructure across the country. Speaking about the decision, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports says, "It is our endeavour to make India one among the top 10 countries in the 2028 Olympics. To fulfill this goal we need to identify and nurture a large number of talented sportspersons from an early age. With the availability of good coaches and equipment facilities at the district-level Khelo India Centers, I am confident that we will be able to find the right children for the right sport and at the right time."

Padma Shri Awardee and Guinness Record holder, mountaineer Anshu Jamsenpa thanked the Union Government for opening 143 new Khelo India Centres across 7 states including Arunachal Pradesh. She added that it has been a long-time demand for such sporting infrastructure in the state. She feels that there is no dearth of sporting talent in the north-east region and with the introduction of these new facilities and opportunities, sportspersons will excel and emerge as champions in different disciplines. Jamsenpa also believes that Khelo India Centres will also strengthen the sports culture in the region even further.

While providing good quality infrastructure to the sporting talent in the state, the KICs will also act as an employment generator for sportspersons from the state who are not in an active playing career any longer. As part of the partnership with the centre and to be eligible for the grant from the Sports Ministry, the Arunachal Pradesh government will have to hire past 'Champion Athletes' as coaches and mentors for young trainees at these centers.

A one-time initial grant of Rs 5 lakh each will be provided for the preparation and upgradation of sports fields, purchase of sports equipment, sports kits, and so on. The annual recurring grant for every centre is also Rs 5 lakh each for a period of four years, which can be extended further for remuneration of the past champion athlete as coach, support staff, purchase of equipments, sports kits, consumables, participation in competition and events.

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