



## 'World Football incomplete without India'

### From the GS' Desk



*It's not everyday that the man comes visiting. But March was different as FIFA President Mr. Joseph S. Blatter came calling to the Capital on March 9, 2012. It was a hurricane visit, but a very significant one indeed.*

*The All India Football Federation has always been grateful to Mr. Blatter for his support and this time stays no different. AIFF President Mr. Praful Patel did have some discussions with Mr. Blatter and he was very appreciative of AIFF's initiative of setting up Regional and Elite Academies. The AIFF Executive Committee members also had talks with Mr. Blatter.*

*From the personal front, it was nice to interact with such a humble human being.*

*The AIFF Annual General Body Meeting was also held in the month and it was nice to meet and speak to the Members of the State Associations -- all for the betterment of football in the country.*

*The month also witnessed two historical achievements as far as Indian football is concerned. The AIFF successfully conducted FUTURO III in New Delhi and then the U-13 girls won the AFC U-13 girls Tournament in Colombo. My heartiest congratulations!*

*Meanwhile, the lessons learnt in India's campaign in the AFC Challenge Cup will help us plan the future. The I-League has re-started and the 2nd Division League is nearing its final stages. May the best teams win.*



He came, he saw, he conquered. FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter was at his witty best during his short stay in New Delhi on March 9. But the visionary that he is, he insisted on "India playing a part for the development of World Football."

"My aim as the FIFA President stays to establish Football in the Continent of India," he commented, as he repeatedly stressed on India being a "Continent rather than a country."

Mr. Praful Patel, the President of the All India Football Federation announced that India would be making two significant bids as far as World Football is concerned. "India are staging a serious bid to host the U-17 World Cup in 2017," he informed. "Apart from that, we would also bid to host the 2015 World Club Cup. Both the Tournaments would provide an excellent opportunity for our players to rub shoulders with the best of the World," he maintained.

Mr. Blatter who met the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the President, Mrs. Pratibha Patil during his stay in Delhi, however, didn't commit on the two Tournaments coming to India. "FIFA stay a

democratic setup. Both are positive developments no doubt. But it's upto the FIFA Executive Committee to decide," he opined.

"I have been closely following the development of football in India. The FIFA Development Office is presently based in Delhi and the setting up of the Regional and the Elite Academies are a step in the right direction," Mr. Blatter stressed.

"I had referred to India as the Sleeping Giant during my last visit to India in 2007. But I know, the giant has started to wake up," he opined.

Mr. Patel added: "The two bids set a target for the AIFF and also the Government of India. We stay aware of the lack of good infrastructure at the moment. But I assure you, we will overcome all," he reiterated.

"The Prime Minister wants to see India as one of the Premier Footballing Nations. Nothing can be more inspirational for Indian football."

Mr. Blatter summed up the mood: "There cannot be World Football without India."

Mr Zhang Jilong, the Acting President of the Asian Football Confederation was also present on the occasion.



for more pics  
Turn to Page 2





# AIFF meets for Annual General Body Meeting



The Annual General Body meeting of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) was held at the AIFF Headquarters, Football House in New Delhi on Monday (March 19). The President of the All India Football Federation Mr. Praful Patel chaired the meeting in the presence of AIFF General Secretary Mr. Kushal Das, Vice-Presidents, Mr. Subrata Dutta, Mr. Ankur Datta, Mr. AR Khaleel and Mr. Venod Sharma.

The Executive Committee members of the AIFF and members from all the Member State Associations (except Arunachal Pradesh) and other stakeholders were also present as was Dr. Shaji Prabhakaran, FIFA Regional Developmental Officer for South and Central Asia; representatives from AIFF's Marketing partners and invitees from sponsors.

In his address, Mr. Patel stressed on laying a solid foundation which would take Indian Football to the next level. "We need to have a comprehensive Youth Development Programme which would guide us in the right direction," he said. "The Regional and the Elite Academies are going as per schedule," he

added. "Coach Education stays an integral part of the Curriculum." "2011 was an eventful year for Indian football. Besides India winning the SAFF Championship, the U-16 boys made it to the final phase of the AFC U-16 in Tashkent, which is commendable indeed. I also congratulate the U-13 girls for winning the AFC U-13 Football Tournament in Colombo recently," Mr. Patel opined.

Mr. Kushal Das announced that a new U-19/20 National Level tournament would be held every season from now on.

Dr. Prabhakaran made a presentation titled 'Performance' which stressed on Professional Football Management.

A minute's silence was also observed prior to the start of the meeting in memory of former Internationals and Office administrators -- Mr. Sailendra Nath Manna, Mr. K.V. Varadraj, Mr. A.S. Firoze, Mr. M.A. Sattar, Mr. Bobby Hamilton, Mr. Arjun Bikram Shah and Mr. Ejaz Hussain, all of whom passed away.



# U - 13 GIRLS CREATE HISTORY...



## India win AFC U-13 Tournament

India's U-13 girls created history when they won the AFC U-13 Girls Football Tournament held in Colombo. The girls won all their five matches and defeated the likes of Iran (1-0), Bhutan (13-0), hosts Sri Lanka (7-0), Jordan (7-1) and Palestine 9-0 on way to winning the tournament.

On returning back home, the triumphant squad were felicitated at All India Football Federation Headquarters. AIFF General Secretary Kushal Das congratulated girls for putting up such a stupendous performance. "I congratulate you for the feat which you have achieved. Hope you will continue with this in the future tournaments. All of you have made the country proud," he said. Mr. Das also announced a

cash reward of Rs 5000 each for the players and the support staff.

AIFF Technical Director Rob Ban also appreciated the effort. "It's nice to see U-13 girls playing with so much passion. I congratulate them for their effort," he said.

Head Coach Priya sounded elated. "We are very happy that we won. This is a step in the right direction. We hope to sustain our performance even at the U-14 tournaments."

She also lauded AIFF's support and the reward awarded to the team. "AIFF has been very encouraging and this kind of appreciation would only inspire more players to take up the sport in the country," she added.

## ...But Men disappoint in AFC Challenge Cup

India who had qualified for the 2011 Asian Cup failed to live upto the expectations in the AFC Challenge Cup in Kathmandu. India who were clubbed in the 'Group of Death' with World Cuppers DPR Korea, Philippines and Tajikistan couldn't get cracking. The 'Blue' led by AIFF Player-of-the-Year Sunil Chhetri lost their matches and bowed out in the Group stage.

Pre-tournament favourites DPR Korea lived upto their top billing winning the tournament, thus earning a ticket for the 2015 Asian Cup. They defeated Turkmenistan 2-1 in the final. Meanwhile, Philippines won the third-placed play-off when they beat Palestine 4-3.



IMG | Reliance



Panasonic  
ideas for life



# FIFA FUTURO III ends successfully

The FIFA Futuro III Referees Instructors Course was conducted in New Delhi from March 1 to 6, 2012. This was first-ever FIFA Futuro III Referees Instructors in India.

The twenty participants who went back “enriched” with what they have been taught were awarded Certificates by Mr. Kushal Das, the General Secretary of the All India Football Federation. Mr. Lim Kee Chong, FIFA Referees Instructor, Mr. Muhiseen Ariff, RDO-FIFA Instructor and Goutam Kar, Head of Referees, AIFF were also present on the occasion.

Chong stressed, “the hardest phase begins now. It’s now up to the Instructors to go back and teach others,” he said. “It’s all about the sharing the knowledge.”

Das also echoed the same sentiments, besides thanking FIFA for the Course to be held in India.

Ariff, the hard taskmaster, found “the knowledge of the Indian Instructors to be impressive.”

“It’s now your responsibility to produce Referees. But you need to stay fit as it isn’t all about theoretical knowledge. Once one hits the field for the practical sessions, it’s imperative



for the Instructor to stay fit,” he maintained.

On behalf of FIFA he also thanked the Mr.Praful Patel, the President of the All India Football Federation and Mr. Das for their support and positive attitude.

Kar, Head of Referees, AIFF thanked FIFA and Ariff profusely. “Without FIFA’s support this Course wouldn’t ever come to India. Once that was done, we needed a competent individual to conduct the Course. Ariff has been the right man for the job,” Kar maintained.

“The All India Football Federation has invested in the Course. Now it’s your turn to pay the Federation back,” he insisted to the Instructors.



## STARS FOR THE FUTURE



**Assam defeated Chandigarh 2-0 to lift the 34th sub-junior National Football Championship for the Mir Iqbal Hussain Trophy in Goa.**

### I-League re-starts after month-long gap

The I-League entered its final phase after over a month-long gap for India's campaign in the AFC Challenge Cup. The action is hotting up and despite Dempo enjoying a significant lead (at the time of this Newsletter) being printed, all teams believe, it's far from over.

Elsewhere, the 2nd Division League has entered its final phase. And at the halfway stage, it's impossible to predict the two teams who would make it to the final phase.

UPCOMING

- 2nd Division League.
- All on Regional Academies
- I-League and much more

(In our next Edition)