

L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena inaugurates India's highest Astro Turf football grounds, synthetic athletic track and VIP Stand at Open Stadium, Leh

Modern sports infrastructure worth over ₹30 crore dedicated to people of Ladakh

L-G says facility marks beginning of a new era of opportunities for young athletes in Ladakh

Leh, May 14: The Lieutenant Governor of UT Ladakh, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today inaugurated India's highest Astroturf Football Stadium, built at 11,500 ft, in Leh. He also inaugurated the newly-constructed VIP Stand and the laying of the 8-lane synthetic athletic track in the Stadium, marking a major milestone in the development of world-class sports infrastructure in Ladakh.

The VIP Stand at the Open Stadium has been constructed at a cost of ₹19.85 crore under the Special Development Package (SDP) of the Department of Youth Services & Sports, while the synthetic track and Astro Turf football ground have been developed at a cost of ₹10.50 crore under the Government of India's flagship "Khelo India" scheme.

The sports complex includes an 8-lane synthetic athletic track, state-of-the-art Astro Turf football ground, VIP stand, long jump pits, handball and volleyball courts and spectator galleries, making it a fully-equipped sports infrastructure facility. In addition, a 64-room youth hostel has also been developed to provide accommodation facilities for athletes, coaches and visiting teams.

The sports facility is expected to ensure year-round sporting activities despite the extreme weather conditions of Ladakh.

Calling it a historic development, Lieutenant Governor Shri Saxena said that the facility symbolises the collective resolve to build a healthy, strong and empowered society through sports and youth engagement.

"The inauguration of the modern sports infrastructure is a beginning of a new era of dreams, aspirations and opportunities for the youth of Ladakh. It is for the first time in the history of Ladakh that young athletes now have access to international-level sports infrastructure within their own region," Shri Saxena said, while expressing gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the Government of India for their continued support towards the development of Ladakh, particularly in the sectors of infrastructure, tourism, education and sports.

Shri Saxena said that sports are not merely a means of competition and winning medals, but also the foundation of discipline, confidence and a healthy lifestyle. He stated that such world-class sports facilities and training in a high-altitude environment like Ladakh, would help athletes develop greater endurance, resilience and physical strength. He reiterated the UT Administration's vision to produce national and international-level athletes from Ladakh who would bring laurels to both the region and the country.

On the occasion, an exhibition 400-metre mixed relay race was organised. An exhibition football match was also played between Skalzangling FC and Dzawo 11 FC.



