



Raksha Khadse Visits NorthEast United FC, Commends Club's Grassroots Talent Development Model

**"Future of Indian Football Lies in Early Talent Discovery,
Quality Coaching and Athlete Development": Union MoS
Youth Affairs & Sports Raksha Khadse**

**Union MoS Youth Affairs & Sports interacts with
management, coaches and young footballers; highlights
importance of structured pathways for nurturing sporting
talent**

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Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports, Raksha Khadse, visited NorthEast United FC and interacted with the club's management, coaching staff and young footballers, appreciating the club's efforts towards identifying and nurturing football talent from across the country, particularly from the North East region.

The visit was attended by Mandar Tamhane, Chief Executive Officer, NorthEast United FC; Rohit Thorat; Naushad Moosa, Technical Director and Reserve Team Head Coach; along with members of the club's management team, coaching staff and young footballers.



During the interaction, the club's leadership briefed Raksha Khadse on NorthEast United FC's youth development philosophy, talent identification framework and long-term vision for creating a sustainable pathway for young footballers.

The Minister was informed about the club's extensive talent scouting initiative led by Naushad Moosa, under which coaches travelled across various parts of the country to identify promising young footballers. Players were scouted through the club's network of coaches and former players, youth competitions organised by the All India Football Federation, and continuous monitoring of players representing India at youth national team levels.



As part of the selection process, nearly 60 promising young players were invited to Guwahati for final selection trials. The selected players are expected to form the core of the club's Under-18 and Reserve Team setup, further strengthening NorthEast United FC's long-term player development pathway.

Raksha Khadse appreciated the club's structured approach towards talent identification and athlete development and highlighted the importance of creating strong grassroots-to-elite pathways for young sportspersons.



“The future of Indian football depends on our ability to identify talent early, provide quality coaching and create structured opportunities for progression. Initiatives that combine grassroots scouting, athlete development and long-term planning are critical for strengthening India's football ecosystem,” she said.

The Minister noted that the North East continues to be one of India's strongest sporting regions and has consistently produced exceptional football talent. She emphasised that sustained investments in coaching, infrastructure and scientific athlete development would help unlock even greater potential from the region.



Raksha Khadse also reiterated the Government's commitment to promoting grassroots sports, strengthening athlete development systems and creating greater opportunities for young sportspersons across the country.

The visit formed part of her engagements in Meghalaya and the North East aimed at reviewing sports infrastructure, athlete development initiatives and youth-focused programmes in the region.

Ayushman Kumar

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