



Sports Ministry to celebrate golden jubilee of Tokyo Olympics triumph

- *'Class of 64' who won gold medal in Japan to be honoured at the Dhyan Chand National stadium on Wednesday with a cash prize of Rs 7.5 lakhs each*
- *Men and junior team to play an exhibition match in honour of the former greats*

New Delhi: The golden jubilee of India's Olympic hockey gold at the 1964 Tokyo Games would be celebrated at the historic Dhyan Chand National Stadium with the Honorable Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Sarbananda Sonowal and Sports Authority of India (SAI) honouring the members of 'Class of 64' at a colourful ceremony on Wednesday.

The gold medal winning performance of the team led by star midfielder Charanjit Singh was the last of India's gold era triumphs as they wrested back the yellow metal from neighbours Pakistan in a tight contest in the Japanese capital. This was India's seventh gold medal at the Games with the last and final one coming in 1980 at Moscow.

Gracing the occasion would be six of the eight surviving members of the squad including Charanjit Singh, while five of the deceased members would be represented by the family members and would witness an exhibition match between the Indian senior and junior team at a venue where they themselves have recorded many a triumphs.

The members and next to kin of the deceased players would be awarded a cash prize of Rs 7.5 lakhs each in honour of their achievement.

Speaking about the function, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Sarbananda Sonowal said "The 1964 gold medal winning performance is undoubtedly one of the most emotional moment for Indian hockey lovers. It was the golden era of Indian hockey and there could have been no better time to celebrate the 50 years of that triumph. Your medal winning performance at Tokyo Olympics has made the country proud & have inspired many aspiring hockey players of the country."

Indian hockey is once again in a state of resurgence with the national team regaining the Asian Games gold for the first time since 1998 and also bagged the Commonwealth Games silver medal apart from winning a Test series against the formidable Australia in their own backyard. The Indian teams is also being looked as one of the medal contenders in the Champions League to be held in Bhubaneswar next month.

Even the junior are not behind with the squad winning the Sultan of Johar Cup in Malaysia for the second successive year, while the women team won the bronze medal in the 2014 Incheon Asian Games.

“While it would be a nostalgic moment for the former greats, I am sure it would be an inspiration for the current players and youngsters who are learning the ropes of the game to interact with the legends and get a feel of what it means to win an Olympic gold,” he added.

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