



## Press Release

New Delhi: 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur inaugurates Khelo India Women's Hockey League Under 21; Winners to get prize money of Rs 30 lakh**

OR

**A big boost to grassroot level hockey as Sports Minister inaugurates first-ever Khelo India Women's Hockey League; Winners to get cash prize of Rs 30 lakh**

**New Delhi, December 15:** Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Anurag Singh Thakur formally inaugurated the first-ever national level Khelo India Women's Hockey League (Under 21) at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi on Wednesday. Shri Thakur was joined by Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Nishith Pramanik and the Indian Olympic Association President Mr Narendra Batra and other dignitaries. The league holds a cash prize of Rs 30 lakh for the winners, 15 lakh from MYAS and 15 lakh from Hockey India.

A total of 14 teams are competing in the first phase of the tournament to be held from December 15 to 21. As many as 42 matches will be played during the first phase, while the second and third phase will be held early next year.

Congratulating the Sports Authority of India and Hockey India for jointly organising the first-ever national level Khelo India league, Shri Thakur spoke of the importance these leagues and said, "All our athletes train very hard through the year, but it is very important for athletes to also get enough competition exposure if they have to prepare themselves for bigger competitions in the future. Therefore having leagues of this kind, that give athletes competition exposure throughout the year, is crucial." Shri. Thakur said that going forward, leagues for other sports disciplines will also be held. He also mentioned that after 2015 this is the first big programme being held at the Dhyanchand stadium and welcomed the players to the iconic venue.

Reiterating the vision of Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Shri Pramanik mentioned, "Led by the vision of Shri Modi ji, we are taking forward the campaign of Cheer 4 India through this



league. I believe there are many such young players who will always make sure we keep our flag high in the sporting arena."

Shri Batra, IOA President said that the league would do wonders in terms of taking hockey to every part of India. "I believe this is a big initiative. The support from SAI and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in the last 5-6 years have been immense and this positive attitude has helped in getting a very good result for hockey in the Olympics this year," Shri Batra said.

**EOM**