

## Press Release

### **Sesa Football Academy Sweeps Top Honors at the Goa Football Association (GFA) Awards Ceremony**

**Goa, 9<sup>th</sup> June'24:** In a glittering Awards Ceremony, hosted by the Goa Football Association (GFA), Vedanta's Sesa Football Academy (SFA) bagged the top accolades for having displayed stellar performances during the 2023-24 season. The annual event, which celebrates the year-round achievements of GFA-registered clubs, witnessed SFA being honoured in both individual & team categories.

The ceremony was graced by the distinguished presence of Shri Kalyan Chaubey, President-All India Football Federation, Padma Shri Brahmanand Sankhwalkar, Former Indian Captain & Goalkeeper, Mr. Caitano Fernandes, President-GFA, Mr. Antonio Pango, Sr. Vice-President-GFA & Mr. Jonathan Rjf De Souza, Vice-President, GFA, Mr. P K Mukherjee, Former Managing Director-Sesa Goa & Independent Director, SCDF in the presence of other dignitaries from the Goan Football Fraternity & beyond.

The awards swept by Team SFA at the ceremony included a special trophy by the association for having finished as **Runners-Up at the Goa Pro League 2023-24, Top-Tier**, also securing a coveted position for themselves in the **I League 3**. The awards were presented by Shri Kalyan Chaubey, President, AIFF and Mr. Caitano Fernandes, President-GFA. Furthermore, the SFA U-19 team was recognized for its commendable performance, finishing as **Runners-Up in the GFA U-19 Division I League**.

**Shri Kalyan Chaubey, President of the All-India Football Federation**, lauded team SFA, stating, "Heartiest congratulations to Team Sesa Football Academy for qualifying for I-League III. Sesa has made immense contributions to Indian football since 1999 through its academy, consistently producing some of the nation's finest footballers. I extend my best wishes to the team for their journey in I-League 3 and hope to see more outstanding players emerge from Sesa Football Academy."

In the individual category, Joshua D'Silva was a standout, earning **the Fan's Player of the Year** title with an impressive 3,532 votes out of 13,000 polled online. He was also named **GFA Player of the Year** for his exceptional achievements, including scoring 24 goals in the Goa Pro League Season.

Charles Dias was honored as **Coach of the Year** by the association for his exemplary leadership, guiding SFA to a near victory in the Goa Pro League, narrowly missing the top spot by a single point, and leading the team to the Santosh Trophy finals in Arunachal Pradesh.

The Vedanta Women's League, which concluded last year, also received a special mention at the ceremony. In addition, 5 SFA players Joshua D'Silva, Clencio Pinto, Daniel Gomes, Shridharnath Gawas, and Umang Gaikwad who represented Goa State Team in the recently concluded Santosh Trophy and helped in securing the 'Runners' Up 'position after a long hiatus, were also recognised with **'Special Trophies'**

Commending Vedanta Sesa Goa for their contribution towards improving football infrastructure for women, **Caitano Fernandes, President-Goa Football Association** said *"Vedanta Sesa Goa has supported Goan football in many ways. Their support to women's football has been a game changer, and it is only because of the Vedanta Women's League*

*that Goa State won the U-15 Girls Nationals after a gap of 22 years because the VWL allowed us to create the talent pool and revive girls and women's football."*

SFA is a flagship CSR project of Vedanta Sesa Goa foundation & is managed under the aegis of the Sesa Community Development Fund (SCDF). SFA aims to develop quality footballers from the state of Goa and across the country by creating environment for discovering, nurturing, and building talent for Indian Football. The academy identifies and trains talented youngsters, who are passionate about Football at the grassroot level by inducting them into its residential programme and over a period of four years, nurtures and develops them into professional footballers and well-disciplined citizens while taking care of their academic education throughout the residential training programme.

SFA has groomed over 180+ boys since its inception in 1999 and has made tremendous impact on the football fraternity across the country. Most of the academy alumni have represented the National team, I-League clubs, and prestigious football clubs across the nation. 9 players have earned the National team cap and many alumni have played the elite Indian Super League (ISL). Apart from Residential football training programmes through Sesa Football Academy, Vedanta has also launched Vedanta women's league (VWL) in collaboration with GFA, which is one of its kind platforms for aspiring women footballers across Goa state. 430+ Women footballers from across Goa have represented various clubs in the 7 editions of VWL so far. Apart from this, the SFA has contributed to reviving age-group football for both boys and girls through the conduct of the U-15 Youth Cup for boys and the inaugural Sesa Vedanta U-15 Youth Cup for girls and has collaborated with AWES for organising four editions of veterans' tournament as well.