

SFA & GFDC Partner to Boost U-12 Girls' Football in Goa

Mayem, Goa: Sesa Football Academy (SFA), in partnership with the Goa Football Development Council (GFDC), inaugurated the Sesa–GFDC Under-12 Girls' Football Tournament at Mayem Ground.

The tournament, which commenced on 29th January 2026, is meant to provide a platform for young girls with aspirations to take up the sport and has witnessed participation from over 300 young girls representing teams across North and South Goa. The tournament stands as one of the largest structured grassroots platforms dedicated to girls' football in Goa.

The inauguration ceremony was graced by Chief Guest-Shri Premendra Shet, Hon'ble MLA for Maem Constituency, Guest of Honour-Mr. Glenn Ticlo, Chairman, GFDC, Ms. Fransquinha Oliveira, Member Secretary, GFDC, Ms. Kunda Vishnu Mandrekar, ZP Member, Mr. Vishant Pednekar, Sarpanch, V.P Maem, Ms. Seema Sanjay Arondekar, Panch Member, V.P Maem, Mr. Nitin Gaddi, Council Member, GFDC, and Vedanta Sesa Goa executives.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Premendra Shet, Hon'ble MLA for Maem Constituency, stated, "The holistic development of our children necessitates a balanced emphasis on both academics and sports. Physical activity plays a vital role in fostering discipline, resilience, leadership, and overall well-being among young learners. I commend Sesa Football Academy and the Goa Football Development Council for instituting a structured platform that enables young girls to pursue sporting excellence alongside their academic aspirations."

The teams have been divided into four zones. Teams representing Zone 1 from the Northern Zone include Arambol, Pernem, Mandrem, Tuem, Aldona, Poirá. Zone 2 from North is composed of Mayem, Sanquelim, Zarme, Valpoi, Savoiverem, Dona Paula, Zone 3 from South included Dabal, Cortalim, Sao Jose De Areal, Navelim, Seraulim while teams representing Zone 4 from South included Quepem, Uguem, Ambelim, Devabhag.

Mr. Glenn Ticlo, Chairman, GFDC, remarked, "The Goa Football Development Council remains steadfast in its commitment to strengthening football at the grassroots level. Our collaboration with Sesa Football Academy reflects a shared vision of expanding opportunities for young girls and institutionalizing pathways for talent development. We deeply appreciate Vedanta Sesa Goa's sustained contribution towards nurturing the football ecosystem in the State." He further asserted that there is a need for all stakeholders to work together to raise the level of the game in the State & to ensure that the players get the quality training and playing opportunities. He also emphasized that with the support of Dr Pramod Sawant, Hon'ble CM, Goa and Shri Ramesh Tawadkar, Hon'ble Minister for Sports, the game of football in Goa will see tremendous progress.

Speaking on behalf of Vedanta Sesa Goa, Ms. Leena Verenkar, Head – CSR & SCDF, said, "At Vedanta Sesa Goa, we believe that sport serves as a powerful enabler of social progress and individual transformation. Through Sesa Football Academy, we are committed to creating inclusive and structured opportunities that empower young girls to realize their full potential. The Sesa–GFDC U-12 Tournament not only provides

competitive exposure but also fosters fitness and good health, which aims to further strengthen women's football in Goa."

Member Secretary, Ms. Fransquinha Oliveira speaking on the occasions said that "Grassroot football is the backbone of Goan football & such initiatives help us identify, nurture and shape young talent at an early age." She also expressed her gratitude towards Vedanta Sesa Goa and all stakeholders for their continued support and collaboration.

Expressing pride in hosting the event, Mr. Vishant Pednekar, Sarpanch, V.P Mayem stated, "It is an honour for Maem to host an initiative of such scale and significance. We extend our sincere appreciation to Sesa Football Academy and the Goa Football Development Council for their efforts in promoting sports among young girls and for contributing meaningfully to community development through structured sporting engagement."

Sesa Football Academy has been at the forefront of football in Goa for over 26 years and has produced over 230 footballers as part of its residential training program. 14 men and women players from SFA have gone on to represent India at the international level. Overall 8000+ aspiring footballers have been provided with a platform to showcase their skill and talent through various initiatives undertaken by SFA. The Academy organizes several football tournaments of note such as the Vedanta Women's League, U-15 Vedanta Youth Cup, Vedanta Football Championships and collaborates regularly with Goa Football Association to host the Indian Women's League – 2, it also conducts various license courses for aspiring football coaches.