

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS  
(DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS)  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No-2239**  
ANSWERED ON- 18/12/2025

**QUALIFYING IN FIFA WORLD CUP**

2239 SHRI JOSE K. MANI

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government has noted that Curaçao, with a population of 158, 000, recently qualified for the FIFA World Cup 2026;
- (b) whether Government has long-term plans to help India qualify for the FIFA World Cup;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the steps taken by Government at the grassroots level to develop football talent in the country;
- (e) whether Government has any plans to upgrade stadiums and training facilities to international standards; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

(DR. MANSUKH MANDAVIYA)

(a) to (d) Qualifying for FIFA world cup is based on the criteria laid down by FIFA, International Governing Body for football sport discipline. Responsibility for development of a specific sports including taking steps for participation in World Cup/ World Championships is that of concerned National Sports Federation (NSF). All India Football Federation (AIFF) has been recognized by the Ministry as the NSF for the promotion and development of the football sport discipline in the country. AIFF has informed that it has a long term plan to help India qualify for FIFA World Cup, with a focus on both the Men's and Women's National Team. Towards this objective, AIFF has launched the first FIFA-AIFF Boys Under-13 Football Academy in Bhubaneswar, FIFA-AIFF Boys Under-13 and FIFA-AIFF Girls Under-14 Football Academy in Hyderabad. In addition, through the Khelo India Asmita League, the AIFF organized Girls' football competitions, conducting 87 leagues & 68 leagues, across the country, during 2023-24 and 2024-25 season, respectively.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, on its part, provides support through various schemes, such as Scheme of Assistance to National Sports Federations, Khelo India Scheme and Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).

(e) & (f) “Sports” being a State subject, primary responsibility for creation / upgradation of sports infrastructure including upgrading stadiums and training facilities to international standards is that of the respective State Governments. The Union Government supplements their efforts by bridging critical gaps. Under the “Creation and upgradation of sports infrastructure” component of the Khelo India Scheme, this Ministry renders financial support for creation of basic sports infrastructure including football fields. The details of the sports infrastructure, including football fields, sanctioned under Khelo India Scheme, across the country, are available in public domain on the dashboard of the Ministry at <https://mdsd.kheloindia.gov.in>

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