

Students from Odisha share their experiences on Olympic Values Education Program at the IOC Session in Mumbai

The Olympic Values Education Program in Odisha was launched by the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in 2022. It is being implemented currently in 250 government schools in Odisha in partnership with the IOC and Abhinav Bindra Foundation Trust. IOC President Mr Thomas Bach appreciates the students

Mumbai, 15 October 2023: At the on-going 141st IOC Session in Mumbai, five students of the Government schools from Odisha, Somya Ranjan Barik, Suchismita Sahoo, Pratyasha Sahoo, Mohammad Hammad Noorain and Bharati Sabbar, were invited to share their experience of being part of the Olympics Values Education Program (OVEP).

The OVEP program was launched in May 2022 in Odisha, India by the Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik. The program is implemented by the School and Mass Education Department of Government of Odisha in partnership with the Olympic Museum of the IOC, and the Abhinav Bindra Foundation Trust.

OVEP is active in 250 government schools in Odisha. It impacts 200,000 students, ranging from 2nd to 10th grade (7-16-year-olds). The OVEP teaches the core Olympic values of friendship, excellence, respect, and fair play. OVEP fosters social and emotional learning through teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, improving students' social skills and relationships.

Sharing her experience, Bharati Sabar said, "By participating in OVEP I have learnt to enjoy new experiences. OVEP has made me engage in many new activities, such as mixed gender football. I've also been elected the captain of the football team in my school which is something I never would have imagined before. I dream of representing Odisha and India in the Olympics, and I think many girls can benefit from opportunities like this.

Echoing her peer's sentiment, Mohd Noorain said, "As part of OVEP I got to attend a model IOC session in my school, it was a group of boys who nominated Bharati as captain of the football team, we would've never imagine playing football with girls and now we are part of a team led by one. This is because OVEP has taught us a lot of about Fair Play and so we decided on the best person to lead the team."

Olympic Champion and Member, IOC Athletes Commission Abhinav Bindra, made a presentation on the program implementation in Odisha and highlighted the success of the program that has encouraged students to return to a routine following the pandemic with over 100,000 OVEP sessions across 250 schools. Furthermore, OVEP encouraged 15,000 girls to participate in sport for the first time, including mixed gender games. The 'Let's Move' Campaign saw over 7 million children from Odisha participate, encouraging meaningful physical activity. OVEP balances the role emphasis on academic achievements and physical education, recognizing Physical Education teachers as champions of the program.