

India's budding players to train at Brazilian Football Academy

Sixteen budding Indian footballers from seven schools will fly out to Brazil for a six-day training camp beginning Monday.

The players, selected from among 3,000 footballers who participated in an all-India tournament held across eight cities, would attend the camp in Rio de Janeiro till July 12.

Former India international Jo Paul Ancheri would accompany the players as coach.

Organised by beverage giant Coca Cola in partnership with Brazilian Football Academy (BFA), the camp would see the Indian footballers joining 312 others from 24 countries.

Carlos Alberto Pereira, member of two World Cup winning Brazilian sides, is the technical director of the BFA.

The initiative, a part of the Football Champs Programme of the beverage major, follows a tournament in which 184 schools from Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Goa, Chennai, [Bangalore](#) and Cochin competed.

Kolkata's Ahiritola Bongo Vidyalaya, six of whose players figure in the 16, emerged champions defeating St Joseph High School Goa in the final.

Later, the 3,000 participating footballers were rated on physical, technical, tactical and mental parameters and the top 16 with maximum points were selected for the camp in Brazil, Coca Cola India president and Chief Executive Officer Atul Singh told reporters at a function where the young talents were felicitated Friday.

Avjay Gujral of the Shri Ram School, Delhi will captain the Indian footballers.

'I cannot express my feelings. I can't believe that I am going to Brazil, the land of Pele and Garincha. I hope the skills I learn there will help me in my footballing career,' Gujral said.

'We will make it an annual affair. Plans are being drawn to scale up the initiative to cover 500 schools across 30 Indian cities,' Singh said.

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