**IIT Kharagpur**

**Rekhi Centre for Science of Happiness**

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**IIT KGP and Gopichand Badminton Academy to Spread Happiness in Sports**

IIT Kharagpur signed an MoU with Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy (PGBA), Bangalore to promote health and wellbeing within the scope of academics and extra-academic activities. A delegation from IIT Kharagpur led by Director Prof. P P Chakrabarti met the Padma Bhushan awardee and Chief National Coach for the Indian Badminton team, Shri Pullela Gopichand at Delhi on March 30 in this regard. The collaboration is spearheaded by Mr. S S Rekhi, US-based entrepreneur and alumnus of IIT Kharagpur, who seed funded the Rekhi Centre for Science of Happiness at IIT Kharagpur and his company R Systems is the sponsor of Gopichand Badminton Academy.

The thrust areas of the collaboration include developing training programs by IIT Kharagpur focusing on happiness and wellbeing for enhancing the quality of performance and resilience. Players and coaches from PGBA will benefit from these programs. Further the coaches will also be trained on how to use that knowledge while training players. Similar training programs and advisory modules will also be developed for the students and coaches of IITKGP in the field of sports in general and badminton in particular.

Deliberations were made regarding setting up a Sports Academy at IIT Kharagpur in collaboration with PGBA. ***“The Academy would promote collaborative research related to happiness in sports in general and badminton particular and science and technology in sports training. The scope would also include joint monitoring and use of materials used in general and badminton in particular by IIT Kharagpur and Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy”* said Prof. Chakrabarti.**

***“I am very excited about this collaboration and look forward to the contribution of the Rekhi centre towards the wellbeing of my players and coaches. I am also very happy to know of a Sports Academy that is coming up at IIT Kharagpur and look forward to contributing to its development,"*** said P Gopichand.

***“Our vision is to promote the science and practice of positivity for fostering meaningful life, happiness, well-being and holistic self-development. Today we have a lot more options for entertainment and engagement but these do not seem to have improved or rather worsened the mental health. Sports has proven evidence of improving resilience, concentration, tolerance and emotional quotient through training and discipline thus delivering happy generations to lead the world. In the corporate sector or any other field a trained and disciplined mind would always find more acceptance and appreciations,”* said Mr. Rekhi,**

At IIT Kharagpur the program will be coordinated under the Rekhi Centre for Science of Happiness*.* ***“The Centre is developing a training program for the players and coaches to be scheduled in June 2019,”*confirmed Prof. Priyadarshi Patnaik, Head of the Centre.** The program will led by **renowned field experts and faculty of IIT Kharagpur such asProf. M K Mandal, who was also the former Chief Controller (Life Sciences) at DRDO and Dr. Saamdu Chetri, who instituted the Gross National Happiness Centre Bhutan.**

***“The Centre will organize talks and workshops by Mr. Gopichand and coaches from his academy to promote sports and train students at IIT Kharagpur,”* further added Prof. Patnaik.**

IIT Kharagpur has been making sincere efforts to promote health and wellbeing through sports. While the alumni of the Institute have facilitated visits by foreign coaches, allocations were made to the extent of ₹10 crore to develop modern sports facilities.

*“Our state-of-the-art athletics arena with a world class synthetic track is now the best such facility in the IIT System and among the top few in the State. Such initiatives in the domain of sports and games is going a long way in the all-round development of the students of IIT KGP. You can already see the effect with our students winning prizes in State Championships,”* added Prof. Chakrabarti.

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