

Mission XI Million on course to its goal, holds event in Guj

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Ahmedabad, Apr 9 (PTI) Having reached out to over 1.7 million kids already from all over the country, Mission XI Million is closer to its goal of introducing the game of football to 11 million children before FIFA U-17 World Cup kicks off on October 6. A marquee Mission XI Million Football Festival was held at The Arena by TransStadia here in the presence of All India Football Federation President Praful Patel, former Indian football captain Bhaichung Bhutia, Bollywood star **Hrithik Roshan** and TransStadia Founder & MD, Udit Sheth. Around 6000 children were seen at the festival engaging in a variety of fun activities including exhibition games. The lucky kids were felicitated and had the opportunity to show off their skills they have gained through the programme in front of Hrithik and Bhutia. Speaking at the festival, Patel, also chairman of the LOC for the FIFA U-17 World Cup India 2017, said, "Mission XI Million has managed to take the game out to the masses of the country. While it's very heartening to see them embrace the game, it also bestows additional responsibility upon us to develop the game further. "This event is a watershed moment in the history of football in this wonderful state of Gujarat, and we hope over the next few months these kids who were felicitated today will sustain the interest and take it forward." On behalf of The Arena by TransStadia, Founder and Managing Director of the facility Udit Sheth said, "We are extremely proud to have hosted the marquee MXIM Football Festival here. As one of the most technologically advanced football stadiums in the country, we hope that visiting players and fans alike will aspire to for similar set-ups across India. "We want to thank FIFA, AIFF, and the Government of India for the opportunity and strive to become India's backbone for sport," he said on Saturday. A legacy project of the first FIFA tournament that will be held in six cities of the country, the marquee MXIM festival in The Arena, TransStadia, proved to be another milestone in the journey of the project. PTI PDS PDS