

Japanese judo Dronacharya trains locals

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VARANASI: Over two decades ago, a plucky youth from Japan fought through a volley of gunshots in terror-hit Punjab, to guide the latent skill of youths towards Judo.

Mamoru Miura, 51, now in Varanasi, is the two-time National School Judo Champion and has been a seasoned coach training talented judokas in India for 24 years. Undeterred by the blasts that have rocked the city thrice, the village boys here have graduated from akharas to the judo arena. Three of his 35 trainees at the Varanasi Sports Stadium - Subhash Yadav, Ram Asre (Junior) and Gulab Prasad - are probables for Asian Cadet Judo Championship, to be held in China. They will shortly become a part of the National Camp at Aurangabad (Maharashtra).

All these lads from akhara-replete villages have graduated from dest grappling to wearing Judo Gee, guided by NIS-certified and 1985 National Games Bronze Medallist coach Lal Kumar, who interestingly is Miura's ex-pupil. "I first arrived in Kolkata in 1985 and trained promising judokas there, before moving to Punjab, which was burning with terrorism, post-Operation Bluestar in 1987." "Overcoming the fear of being hit by terrorist bullets and sporadically rubbing shoulders with the police, I started training boys and girls in judo to utilise their power in sports," reminisced Miura, 1971 and 1973 Japan National School Champion. Termed as Japanese Dronacharya by Lal Kumar, Miura, who has produced many All India University Champions from Punjab, besides shaping the careers of International champion female judokas like Sonia



■ Judo Guru from Japan Mamoru Miura trains judokas at Varanasi Sports Stadium on Thursday.

SANJAY GUPTA/HT

and Harpreet Kaur, now feels "the spirit of judo, which enthused the youths at the peak of terrorism in Punjab, is slowly on the wane as the judokas now want success via short cuts, which is not possible." Miura, the founder of India-Japan

Friendship Association at Amritsar in the late 1980s, added, "The dedication for judo, which is slowly missing from Punjab, can still be seen in grapplers-turned-judokas from very humble backgrounds in Varanasi. Initial stints in akharas and work-

ing in agricultural plots have ensured that they are still strong enough to rule the Judo arena internationally.

Miura added, "Judo not only tests one's physical power, but even one's mind. You can make your opponent bite the dust only with right combination of mind and body skills." He has established himself as a reputed international coach with successful stints from Kazakhstan to Sri Lanka, Bhutan to Malaysia. The diminutive judo guru from Tokyo, started with his Varanasi trainees on Wednesday. "These lads have the potential to make it big in judo, provided they absorb the spirit of judo (gentle way) which is to make powerful individuals for society and not merely medal winners."

Miura has fought the likes of 1984 Olympic champion Yashuhiro Yamasita in Japan in his hey-days.

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खेल



सिगर स्टेडियम में बुधवार को जापान के जूडो प्रशिक्षक मायूर प्रशिक्षुओं को जूडो की नयी तकनीक के बारे में प्रशिक्षण देते हुए। आरएसओ विजय कुमार के अनुसार मल्टीपरपज हाल में जूडो और बैडमिंटन के प्रशिक्षु साथ-साथ प्रशिक्षण लेने के बावजूद राष्ट्रीय एवं अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय प्रतियोगिताओं में वाराणसी का नाम रोशन कर रहे हैं। -जागरण