

LIST OF PLAYERS FROM ASSAM WHO REPRESENTED INDIAN NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM

1. DR. TALIMEREN AO : Dr. Talimeren Ao was born on 28 January 1918 in Changki village of Nagaland. Talimeren Ao, popularly known as T Ao, is considered as one of India's all time great soccer players. He played for the Maharana Club of Guwahati In 1943 Ao joined Mohun Bagan. In Mohun Bagan, Ao was Centre-Half and along with his two Backs, they were popularly known as "the Great Wall of China". He was given the captain's armband in 1948 to captain the Indian Football Team in London.

In 1948, a year after India won its independence, Ao was the captain of the India national football team in the 1948 Summer Olympics, in the team's first official game and was the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent. The Indian team's first match was against Burma, but the game was a walkover. In India's second match, against France, the team lost 2–1, with the India goal coming from Sarangapani Raman. Ao played five more matches for India before retiring.

Dr. Ao was Doctor by profession and he was given the post of Assistant Civil Surgeon. He later became Civil Surgeon. He went on to be appointed Director of Nagaland Health Services, from which he retired in 1978.

In 2002 the Mohun Bagan honored him by creating the Mohun Bagan Ratna Award and giving him a Life Membership. In Assam, an outdoor stadium at Kaliabor and an indoor stadium at Cotton College have been named after him.

In 2009, Union Minister for Mines and DoNER, B.K Handique, inaugurated the first Dr. T. Ao Football Trophy at the DDSC Stadium in Dimapur, Nagaland, to encourage and challenge the North-East Youth to excel in both sports and academics.

2. GILBERTSON SANGMA : Gilbertson Sangma was born in 12th April 1955 in Dibrugarh. He was a super star during 80's. he rules Assam Football for about two decades with his natural talent. Sangma received his early football lessons in the Police Reserve, before he represented Golaghat in the Senior Inter District Soccer championships in 1973. The opportunist striker was immediately picked up for the State Santosh trophy team in which he represented Assam from 1973-1980. Sangma also donned Indian team colour in three international matches at Indonesia and Thailand in 1975. The nimble footed player became a household name during 70's and 80's with his brilliant performance which also helped his team, Assam Police, to win several big level competitions, including the Bordoloi trophy. Sangma's speed, ball control and presence of mind made him a super star at a very early stage of his career. He was also a perfect team man and treated every member of the team, even new comers, equally in the dressing room as well as in the ground and because of this quality he always earned great respect from his teammates. Sangma, who received Lachit award in 1979, retired as a top official of Assam Police and is still a regular visitor in different soccer activities in Guwahati.

- 3. TOSHEN BORA** : Toshen Bora was born on 14th February 1950 at Naharkatia. He represented Indian soccer team in 1971-72 Pre-Olympic tournaments. Bora turned out for Assam in different competitions from 1969-1973 and later also collected NIS coaching degree. He served Assam team as a coach in the Santosh trophy soccer championship and had also seen as the selector of Indian Junior soccer team.
- 4. DEBASHISH ROY** : Debasish Roy was born on December 2, 1954 at Karimganj. He was the only player from Assam who played in all three big clubs of Kolkata- Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting. He also represented two top clubs of the state - Gauhati Town club and Navajyoti club before moving to Kolkata. Roy, a versatile centre forward, was a good sprinter and his run with the ball was a delight to watch. He represented Assam twice in Santosh trophy and five occasions for Bengal. Roy also represented India on several occasions and was also the vice captain of the Indian junior team. He got an opportunity to play professional soccer as a Hongkong based club invited him to play for them. An injury forced him to turn down the offer and because of same reason he couldn't represent India in the 1982 Asian Games held in Delhi.
- 5. SARAT DAS** : Born in 1916, Sarat Das was one of the finest footballer that Assam has ever produced. He caught the eye of Animesh Ganguly, who is known as soccer saint of Assam, at a very early stage of his career and Ganguly gave him a place in the Maharana Club in 1935. That was the beginning. Das took just three to four years to establish himself as one of the best defenders of Assam and his skills attracted the officials of the top clubs of Kolkata when he went there with Maharana Club to play in the IFA Shield. He signed for Mohun Bagan club in 1941 and spent the rest of his life in Kolkata. Football in Kolkata was highly competitive at that time (it remains now also), but he won the hearts of the local soccer fans with his sharp and intelligent brain and great soccer skills. Gosta Paul, who was also a defender of great repute and a father figure in Kolkata football, once admitted that after him, it was Sarat Das who managed the defence best in Kolkata football. Injury forced Das to take retirement from competitive football in 1948 even though he was in the probable list (Manoranjan Banerjee, another Assam player, also selected for the same camp) of Indian team for the London Olympics that year. A die-hard fan of Mohun Bagan club, Das represented the Green Marron brigade in one more season in 1952 when the club was going through a lean phase and club officials invited him to take the charge.

6. BABUL PHUKAN : Babul Phukan was born in 1st May 1968 at Chakalibhoria village near Panitola in Tinsukia district. Babul played for Assam State Sub Junior, Junior and Santosh Trophy teams on several occasions. He was also captain of Assam State Senior Football Team in Santosh Trophy in the year 1989 and 1990. He has played for Indian U-23 Football Team in 1985 at Delhi and Lakhnow against Italy. In the year 1985 he has played for Indian Senior Football Team at Nepal for the first time. He also represented Indian Football Team in several matches. As a member of the SAI team, Babul played against a Russian team in Guwahati and Shillong in 1988

He represented the Maharana Club, one of the oldest clubs of North East and played for the Mohammedan Sporting Club in 1989.

He was a SBI officer. An officer of SBI, he was suffering from liver-related disease for a long time and breathed his last on 14 December 2013 died at a hospital in Guwahati at the age of 48 years

7. JWEL BEY : Jwel Bey was born on 16th April 1969 in Karbi Anglong District. Mr. Bey has played for local clubs in his home state Assam including the Maharana Athletic Club, Gauhati Town Club, A.S.E.B. Sports Club, Guwhati SAI and Assam Police Blues. In 1989, he has represented Assam State Senior Football Team in the Santosh Trophy at Guwahati. And also represented Delhi State U-23 Football Team in 1992 and Maharashtra State Football Team in 1994.

He has played for Dempo Sports Club of Goa and Mahindra & Mahindra Sports Club of Bombay.

Bey made his senior international debut in the SAAF Games in 1989. Later on, in his captaincy, SAI XI has participated in 8 numbers of Matches in Russia. He has represented Indian National Football Team several tournaments including 1991 Pr-Olympic, in 1993 Nehru Gold Cup and Pre-World Cup in 1993.

In 2001 he joined in Assam Police and now he is an Assistant Commandant of Assam Police Battalion and also Head Coach of Assam Police Blues.

8. SUBIR CHOUDHURY : Subir Choudhury in all respect one of the best Stopper of Assam ever produce. He was born in 1950 at Nilgarh Borhula, Silchar. Subir Choudhury has played for Local Clubs in his home town Silchar including Tarun Sangha, United Club, India Club and Tarapur Athletic Club. He also played for Mohammedan Sporting Club.

Subir Choudhury made his international debut in Mardeka Football Tournament which was held in the year 1977. He also played for Indian National Football Team in Afghanistan in 1977, in Kings Cup in Thailand in the year 1977 and in Dhaka Aga Khan Gold Cup in Dhaka.

9. SWADHIN DEKARAJA : Swadhin Dekaraja was an Indian Footballer. He was born in 15th August 1953 at Tagunmara of Morigaon District. He has played for Jut Mills Silghat and Oil India Ltd. Football Club. Swadhin Dekaraja has represented Assam State Football Team in Santosh Trophy from 1975 to 1978. He was an Officer of Oil India Ltd.

Swadhin Dekaraja represented Indian Football Team in several international matches. He represented Senior India Football Team in Mardeka Tournament which was held at Jakarta in year 1976-77. He also represented India in 1975-76 at Afghanistan and in 1977-78 at Bangkok.

10. ARUP DAS : Arup Das was born on 1959 in Karimganj. The Famous Footballer Sri Ajay Das is his brother. He has played for Eastern Railway , East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting Club, Maharana Athletic Club and Gauhati Town Club. He represented Assam Junior Football Team in the Junior National Football Championship for B.C. Roy Trophy in the 1975.

Arup Das represented Indian Senior Football Team in Dubai in Nehru Cup in the year 1982. Also he represented Indian Junior Football Team in the year 1981.

11. SYED ABID IMAM : Syed Abid Imam was born on 20th September 1968. In early he played for Dibrugarh Milan Jyoti Sangha and Star Sporting Club of Guwahati. Later on he joined East Bengal Team. In 1985, he played for Indian Football Team in Nepal Tournament in Nepal. He also represented Indian Junior Football Team in the Asian Youth Football Championship which was held in 1986 at Kuwait.

12. HOLICHARAN NARZARY : Holicharan Narzary was born on 10 May 1994 in Kokrajhar, Assam. He is a professional Indian Footballer. He is right footed and plays on the left wing in the midfield. He is versatile enough to play as a centre forward which makes him different from some of the other wingers of India. Holicharan used to play football in his village, he played in his school team and impressed everyone with his subtle but immaculate skills. He was encouraged to try his luck at Sports Authority of India hostel, he took off to represent Assam at the U-16 National Championships in Mahilpur. Holicharan was scouted for India's U-16 squad after his performances at the Championship tournament. He then progressed his way to the under-19 team giving him a golden chance to break into the senior team. Holicharan made his professional debut for Pailan Arrows against Salgaocar on 15 May 2011, coming on as a substitute he scored his first professional goal but unfortunately couldn't take a win. Narzary came into the International scene on 12 March 2015 against Nepal in a 2-0 win at Guwahati. In the 2012-13 of the I-League Holicharan made 25 appearances for Pailan Arrows which is his highest till now, he scored 5 goals. However in October 2013 Nazary signed for Dempo and played for them for three seasons before joining DSK Shivajians in 2016.

13. VINIT RAI : Vinit Rai was born on 10th October 1997 in Dispur, Assam. His real name is Vinit Rai Chamling. He is an Indian professional footballer who plays as a central midfielder for Indian Team and in the Indian Super League and the Indian football team. Rai was scouted by the Tata Football Academy at the age of 13 and trained there for four years. After graduating from Tata, Rai signed with I-League side Dempo. After spending a majority of the season playing for the club's youth team, Rai made his professional debut for Dempo in the league on 1 March 2015 against East Bengal. After helping Dempo regain promotion to the I-League, Rai signed with Indian Super League side Kerala Blasters in 2016. He made his debut for the team on 1 October 2016 against NorthEast United. After the ISL 2016 season, Vinit Rai signed with Minerva FC and will make its debut in I-league this season. Rai joined Odisha FC for the 2019–20 ISL season as a midfielder.

Rai made his debut for the India under-23 side on 27 March 2015 against Uzbekistan U23 in the 2016 AFC U23 Championship qualifiers. Almost a year later, Rai made his debut on the bench for the India senior side in their FIFA World Cup qualifier against Iran.