

## Barbil to Brazil and Brunei: Saga of a Tribal Boy

Babulu Munda, a tribal boy from Odisha's mineral rich Barbil region of Keonjhar district, is now an international sports star on his own right. With his hard work, perseverance and support from JSPL Foundation, he has earned several national and international laurels in the field of martial arts.



Babulu hails from Sialijoda village of Joda block and lives with his grandmother and elder brother. At a very young age, he lost his father and his mother got remarried. He used to rearing cattle for the villagers to earn livelihood.



JSPL Foundation identified him the underprivileged boy and enrolled him in the Sialijoda primary school where he continued his education as well as started taking interest in martial arts, especially Wushu. JSPL Foundation in order to build Babulu's capacity in Wushu organized training classes for him in 2010. Impressed by his skill Pankaj Mahanta, the Martial Arts Coach of JSPL Foundation, provided special focus and coaching him on regular basis. Babulu also delivered as expected. He won his maiden medal (Silver) in the very first attempt at 16th All Odisha Kick Boxing Championship held at Bhubaneswar in 2011. He was six then. It was just the beginning and he never looked back. JSPL Foundation also made special efforts to let this young sports talent flourish and earn more laurels for the State and Country. Babulu achieved 13 Gold medals, two each in silver and bronzes in the state and national level tournaments.

In 2018, Wushu Association of India selected Babulu Munda to represent in the 7th World WUSHU Championship at Brazil in which he won silver medal for India. Again in 2019 Babulu represented India in the 10th Asian Junior WUSHU Championships'2019 at Brunei, Darussalam winning Silver medal for the country. He received a heroic welcome when he came from the World Wushu Championships. Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik also felicitated this tribal boy for his success.