

## **Commercialisation of Indian sport events: a sea change**

**Suresh Kumar, PhD**

**Noida College of Physical Education, Noida, India.**

[neelamlau@gmail.com](mailto:neelamlau@gmail.com)

Sports have become a foremost global business. The 1990's saw a huge surge in the sports business and this era has been described as the "golden age of sport". The worldwide market spending on sports, fitness and related movements is constantly on the expansion. Sport is very expensive to organise, develop and sustain. Land and buildings are challenging to build and maintain, while costly equipment's need constant replacement. Sport requires philanthropists, patrons or sponsors as well. Sponsorship is the valuable part of the profitable investment, structure in sport to overreaching organisations, individual, clubs and team aids to individual athlete.

Sport is no longer sheer play which is spontaneously involvement in an activity where the source of pleasure is participation rather than the outcome. The contemporary sport is not linked with the religious ceremonies either as was the case in the ancient cultures. The time has changed and with that, the value system has changed.

Active participation in competitive sports not only builds a healthy body but also a healthy mind. This will prepare the youth to come to grip with changed environment sportingly. Today we stand at a threshold on an entirely new and yet an unknown world and this will enable to withstand the rigorous of future challenges.

In every village, town and city in the most part of globe, there is somebody or two who desire to become a celebrity in sports. These are male, female and boy or girl who takes to sport not merely to fill up their spare time. No doubt they can become champions - may be even world-beaters with great fame and enrichment. Indian cricketers are enriched by the profit generated from sports.

Whatever may be the reason for such a drastic change, sport is assuming new dimensions as a social phenomenon. There is an emphasis on achievement and confederation of nation glories with performances are now the global practices being followed at the nation system and global system. To keep pace with the emerging dimensions, it is relevant that our planning and programmes are highly result oriented and provide incentives to motivate participation.

### **Business of Sports**

Sport is speedily expanding widespread and sports remain an organised business in developed economies. The arrival of cable T.V network in the early 1990's as ushered some changes, as exclusive sports channels brought the essence of world sport events in the drawing room of the sport fans.

The Calcutta Cricket and Football Club was the oldest club outside the British Isles. A report published on February 23, 1792 in the Madras Courier newspaper talked about Calcutta Cricket Club's games against *Barrackpore* and *Dum Dum*, military bases then which are parts of Calcutta (new name Kolkata). The matches may have been played near *Raj Bhavan* near 8 Km away from the club's present-day address in south Kolkata (previously known as Calcutta) but the report's credibility has been endorsed by *Cricket Almanack Wisden*.

### **Cricket Biggest source of revenue in India**

Sport has got entangled with commerce after the liberation of 1990 and rapid stretch of satellite small screen (T.V). The Indian Premier League (IPL) and Twenty-20 Cricket have bought mind-blowing riches to the Indian sub-continent. Cricket's role in the contemporary society goes well more beyond money. Cricketers have shattered hurdles of caste, region and religion to emerge as a symbol of hope.

The IPL is the hottest property in the world cricket right now. The IPL has gone on the bigger and bigger. During its 10 years of existence, IPL has come to be known as much for its high-voltage cricket.

In fact, around 80% of the International Cricket Council (ICC) earning is now estimated to come from India and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is now the richest cricket body in the world. At present, the bulk of BCCI's income

comes from television rights. The massive money that television has generated for cricket has converted India into the financial and spiritual heart of the world cricket industry.

The BCCI's can easily project an income of more than Rupees 800 crores (\$1, 20 million) a year from media rights. Cricket dominates TV because it is brilliant organization and administration adapted itself for effective TV and globalization as they took commercial shape in India.

India strength is related to BCCI financial health. Except Australia and England, no cricket playing nation has been able to keep pace with growth and development of the game due to the disparity in financial power. In fact, cricket team which drives its strength from IPL has helped India in playing against the best players. They are able to bring in the global players because of monetary capabilities of BCCI. In fact, Test cricket has only limited appeal, audience, and economic terms and moreover the bigger challenge would be to sell Test match cricket; there will be appropriate value, although for T 20 and One Day International (ODI).

### **World Cup: The most wanted women's final**

The ICC women's world cup cricket final between India and host England held on July,23,2017 at Lord's (the premier cricket ground of the world) in London clocked 19.53 million impressions on TV, making it most watched women sporting event in India. In heart breaking end to a fantastic run. India lost to England by nine runs. In the run-up to the final, India defeated England, Pakistan, West Indies and Australia.

### **Valuable and marketable among athletes**

Indian Cricket skipper Virat Kohli has been ranked seventh in the Forbes (2017) ranking of most valuable brands among athletes, ahead of the Argentinean soccer stalwart like Lionel Messi, English golfer Rory McIlroy and Basketball star Stephen Curry (USA). The Indian cricket captain has brand value \$14.5 million, in a million in list topped by tennis Swiss superstar Roger Federer with \$37.2 million.

Virat Kholi, brash hero and powerful batsman is highly marketable. He is on the track on the way to becoming the richest sports person the India has seen.

Sports competition will boost player economy. Indian captain Virat Kohli and captain of the women's team Skipper Mithali Raj have moved to the number 1 spot in the latest ICC ranking (2017). Virat Kohli has reached 889 points, which is best by an Indian batsman. The previous highest tally of 887 was managed by Sachin Tendulkar in 1998. He scored individual 51 centuries- 11 Vs Australia, 9 Vs Sri Lanka, 7 Vs England, 7 Vs South Africa, 5 Vs Bangladesh, 4 Vs New Zealand, 3 Vs West Indies, 3 Vs Zimbabwe, 2 Vs Pakistan. Indian sports know that much of money in sport is based on a massive national passion for cricket.

### **Media Industry**

The sports programme have made its substantial space in media industry. Now every news channel is presenting special programme on sports. Rapid headway in advertising is made as local, national and international companies target this lucrative underdeveloped market.

### **Kabaddi makes history in India**

In fact, the new millennium has somehow changed the way we consume sport. Kabaddi is a conventional team pursuit game played in India and played in many parts of the subcontinent. It must be the one of the very few games where no equipment is needed. A player kit consists of a jersey, shorts, canvas tennis shoes with plain soles and socks. A demonstration sports in 9<sup>th</sup> Asian Games 1982, Kabaddi made its debut in 1990 in Beijing and was open for men only. Since then the Indian team has won the gold seven times – 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014. The Asian Games Kabaddi for women was first held in Guangzhou in 2010. The Indian team won gold in 2010 and 2014. One of the earliest public performances outside India came in 1936 Berlin Olympic when Hanuman Vyayam Parasark Mandal team of Amravati sent a team to demonstrate the kabaddi .

### **Unexpected sports marketing**

One of the most unpredicted success stories in Indian sport marketing of all time was in Kabaddi. It got a major boost when it was first included in Asian Games in 1990. The game is quite on rise on foreign shores like Canada, USA, New Zealand, Australia and England.

### **Kabaddi makes history in India!**

The fifth Pro-kabaddi League (PKL) final has become India's highest rated non-cricket event on Indian television, according to the viewership data released by the league and its official broadcaster Star Sports. The match has garnered 26.2 million average impressions, second to the 39.4 million final of the 10<sup>th</sup> IPL.

## **Revenue in Football**

At the commencement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, professional football was well established in one kingdom- England. With a flourishing football league and renewed Football Association Cup, England was considered the home of football. Slowly and steadily football becomes popular in numerous European Countries. On October 12, 1902, Austria crushed Germany 5-0 in Vienna. It was the kick-off European international match played outside Britain.

The World Cup in Switzerland was first shown on Television in 1954. Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) earned no revenue from sales of these telecast rights. Almost 56 year later, the sale of telecast rights earned FIFA a fortune huge amount of 2.4 billion dollars for the 64 matches of 2010 World Cup, South Africa. In 2010, a massive successful and 700 million football fans all over the worldwide watched the Netherland Vs Spain final at Soccer City Stadium Johannesburg on July 11, 2010.

## **Indian Super League**

Sharing concepts of the franchise based Indian Premier League (IPL) and major league of the USA the Indian Super League has now become the most significant football league in the country vis-à-vis attendance and television ratings.

English Premier League (EPL) is eye-catching for other leagues of the world. In 2015-2016 spell, its club earned whopping \$5.8 billion. It is almost twice to their nearest rival in the football. Television deal is collector of money. Sky UK Limited (formerly British Sky Broadcasting Limited, BSkyB and Sky) replaced ITV (commercial television channel) as world broadcaster for EPL. It overflowed more money in the purse of all stakeholders. All clubs get richer from television earnings.

In spite of this, EPL fame is going leaps and bounds. Fans in China wear Manchester Unlimited (Founded in 1885- the present name was adopted in 1902)

shirt, Vietnam proudly wear Liverpool's (founded in 1982) jersey and Arsenal day is celebrated in Paraguay (Red shirts with white sleeves and collars, white shorts)

### **Performance of India in Sports**

India is not considered a sporting nation and lags in majority of sports. Its performance has not stood out at global events such as Olympic Games. Nevertheless, at the world level India outshine in a couple of sports such as badminton, boxing billiards, carom, chess, cricket, kabaddi, snooker, shooting and tennis. However, India has performed well in certain non-Olympic sports as well as cricket, carom, chess, kabaddi, billiards and snooker.

### **Commonwealth Games and Asian Games**

India has conventionally performed better in the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games than the Olympics and it has accomplished to rank the top sport nations. The fact remains that fewer countries participate in the sport than Olympics and some of the top Olympics nations, such as the United States, China (take part in the Asian Games but not part of Commonwealth Games), Russia, Germany and France do not participate in these games. Performance in sports is one of the major drives of nation pride.

### **Badminton Breaking Stereotypes**

P.V Sindhu of India went to Rio Olympics 2016 with no sponsorship deals, but she came back with a silver medal and a badminton star status that will be difficult to beat. She featured in top lifestyle magazines. Sindhu is one of the most recognizable faces in India today. India ace shuttler P.V Sindhu is the first Indian woman athlete to win silver medal at the Olympics 2016. She gets an endorsement fee of up to 12.5 million rupees (about \$ 192,000) a day, according to her business agent that haul is second only to Indian cricket skipper Virat Kohli.

Ace Indian women badminton star former world No. 1 Saina Newal (bronze medallist in London Olympics 2012) and P.V.Sindhu (silver medallist in Rio Olympics 2016) both are having world ranking over last 10 years. The men to follow suit: for the first time, The India has five male players in the top 20. China is next best with four in the top. While Denmark, Indonesia, Hong Kong and

Taipei are having 2 players each in the top 20. The biggest prize money ever in Indian Badminton National is about Rs 60 lakhs (\$ 6 million).

From an economic perspective, sports media is a multimillion dollars industry. Broadcast and cable networks currently have billion contracts to TV sports programme. The rapid growth of sports in India is an evidence to this fact.

## **Conclusion**

The most important impact of corporate involvement in sports as of 1990 occurred with 1984 Los Angeles Olympics Games. Globally, the leagues and tournaments have served as an important way for companies to enter the sports sector. A sports league generates several opportunities for private corporate companies in domains such as league management, advertising, player management, franchisee, broadcasting, licensing and merchandising.

India along is home to some of the biggest league in the world such as twenty-20 tournament (T-20) Indian Premier League (IPL), Indian Badminton League, Hockey India League, pro Kabaddi League, Indian Premier League (Football), setting an example for ways of monetizing sports . IPL has made the sport more popular and within reach to watch for cricket fans. Furthermore, IPL has not only brought male audience to primetime TV viewership, but has only tempted female and children audiences. It has managed to magnetize a majority of the top star in the sport and has also extended its presence to places outside of its country of origin. IPL has become a extremely profitable property for BCCI and it has also been able to sustain high TV ratings since the inception. Nevertheless, marketing to sportspersons, sports league has been cutting-edge strategy. Companies have started to cash in on the growing awareness and interest in sports and the vehicle has become more powerful and more recognizable. Apart from economic impact, sports also make important social impact. The sports sector has the potential to make vital contribution to the economy. However, there is no scientific study in India that appraises the socio – economic impact of the sports, a study undertaken by sport in England in 2013 underlines the important contribution that it could make to a country's society and economy. Apart from economic impact, sports also make vital social impact.

## References

1. Abercrombie, N. and Warde, A. (2002) *Contemporary British Society*, Cambridge: polity (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)
2. Andrews, D and Jackson eds (2001) *Sports star*. London Routledge.
3. Brooks, C. (1978) *English Cricket*. London: Weidenfeild and Nicolon
4. Clarke, R. (2003) *the business of sports marketing*. London: Sport Business Group Limited.
5. Crawford, G. (2004) *Consuming sport*, London: Rutledge.
6. Hill, J. (2002) *Sport, Leisure and culture in twentieth century Britain* Basingstoke: Palgrave.
7. Kapadia Novy (2014) *The Football Fanatic's Essential guide*. India Hachette
8. Lau Suresh Kumar (2012) Globalization and the market in Olympic games, *Sports kreeda* 1(1) August, New Delhi
9. -----*Commonwealth Games: Friendly game*, *University news* 48(05) February 01-07,2010, pp. 103-110
- 10.-----*Journey to Incheon Asian Games 2014*, *Sports kreeda* Vol 3 (1), September 2014, pp.1
- 11.----- *An overview of Maulana Abul kalam Azad Trophy*, Vol 6(2), October.2017 P 8
- 12.Lau Suresh Kumar and Mishra Smita (2012)*Olympic ke Mahanayak* (Hindi), Nipun Prakashan, New Delhi