

CSR PROPOSAL: SPORTS SCHOLARSHIP

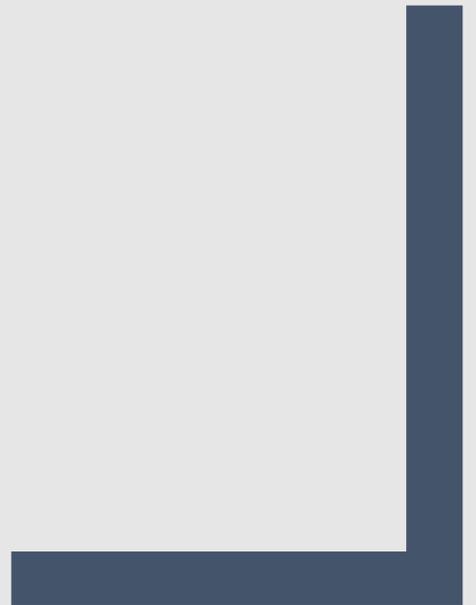


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Abstract

Corporate social responsibility, meaning corporates taking on social responsibility with a view to achieve social impact. Although the intention is correct there have been some serious gaps in CSR spending. While major investment have been in the field of education and healthcare, sports have been very much neglected. Of the INR 8,185 crore spent by companies as part of their corporate social responsibility activities in 2015-'16 only INR 57 crore was reserved for sports. In fiscal year 2017 (FY17), of the actual spend of INR 6,810 crore on corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities by the top 100 National Stock Exchange-listed companies by market capitalization (data for 92 firms was considered), as analysed by Goodera, a CSR and sustainability management platform, only INR 122.71 crore was allocated to sports. CEO of Anglian Medal Hunt Co. (AMHC), a Delhi-based sports management firm said in an interview with mint, "A lot of companies feel that while opening one school can educate at least 200-300 children, training one athlete only has a limited impact. They need to realize that the ripple effect of one athlete performing well can indirectly impact lakhs of others."

Of all the hype around India sending largest contingent ever in Olympics, the country spends only 3 paise per capita per day on sports. Much less developed country like Jamaica spends 19 paise per capita per day, while UK spend 50 paise per capita per day, US is way ahead with INR 22 per capita per day on sports.¹

India's not so great performance at international sports events can be attributed to factors like, smaller talent pool and lack of spending per athlete which is again due to uncertainty in sports as career this in turn can be attribute to lack of spending in sports sector. Solution to this starts with increase in awareness amongst population towards career opportunities in sports. Next, create necessary infrastructure to handle the thus increase in demand in sports, this means create new state of art infrastructure, provide coaching and nutrition. All of which require financial investment, which government is not in a position to make. Government, being a facilitator and policy maker has incentivised investments in sports through CSR. Corporates can invest in sports infrastructure, operation and maintenance, skill development and can claim tax deductions having created asset through CSR.

Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh(SAAP) , being a state sports body is responsible to promote sports and create the necessary infrastructure. While SAAP is running close to 250 infrastructure project simultaneously, there is still a lot that needs to be done to create the necessary impact. It's a huge challenge to sustain these infrastructures as government grants can never be relied on. Secondly a large number of athletes would leave the pipeline of competitive sports just because there are not enough incentives for them to stay.

In order to ensure participation, encourage young talents and show appreciation, SAAP on the lines of Sports policy 2017-22 have decided to select top 5 athletes from each of the 13 districts in 6 disciplines and 10 athletes from athletics discipline to be awarded with scholarship.

¹ The telegraph: 13/08/2016, 3-paise-a-day sports policy

About SAAP

Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP) is a quasi-government organisation , operational since 1988. SAAP was formed to promote sports and provide sports infrastructure across the state of Andhra Pradesh and had been doing it's job with utmost dedication. SAAP has been maintaining 3 cricket grounds, 8 sports venues, 18 indoor stadiums and 16 badminton courts in the newly formed Andhra Pradesh.

With the new leadership of Hon'ble chief minister Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu and sports minister Sri. Kollu Ravindra new sports policy 2017-2022 was formed. Sports policy aims to provide sporting opportunity to every citizen of the state. With this aim, SAAP is creating over 3000 playfields at rural level, 175 krida vikas kendras which are multi discipline sports centre at constituency level. These would serve as recreation for general public and ultimately serve as feeding centres to the 10 Sports Academies.

Apart from spending allotted money to materialise these conceptualised sporting centres, SAAP is creating business opportunities for private players. At this point 4 venues are selected where sports infrastructure will be created on public private partnership mode, wherein apart from the sports infrastructure bit provision for commercial exploits are been conceptualised.

SAAP has extended its coaching facilities to schools, 30 schools with up to the mark sports facilities are selected across the state. Coaching activities of the 10 sports academies and 30 sports adopted schools are outsourced to one of the best coaching firms TENVIC.

Project

It is observed that there is a lot of sports talent in every nook and corner of country. A larger proportion of these talents could not continue their training because of monitory constraints. Parents don't feel there is stable career opportunity in sports. In order to change this mental outlook and provide incentives for these athletes to continue their training, scholarship for top athletes across the state was envisioned in sports policy. SAAP thus intends to provide monitory assistance to top athletes across the state in the form of sports scholarship.

CSR, aims to bring in social impact by corporate initiatives. It is observed that most of CSR goes into education and health care as they think that is where impact per unit of their investment is maximum. Sports is yet again a neglected sector here as well. One need to understand there are 'n' no. of ways a person can find career and have expression in his life. Sports is also one such way and of course one can not neglect the ripple effect that is created out of the success of one Olympics medal. PV Sindhu got silver in Rio Olympics and see how it gave a boost to Badminton in India. Success of Pro kabaddi has re kindled the age old Indian sport. See the glory its bringing to our desi players. The jobs that are created at back end apart from the athletes playing. Above all, see the no. of kids getting inspired to take up sports as career. Nothing like the aspiration of bringing a gold for India in international event.

Vision

SAAP is taking care of 100s of sporting venues across the state. There are talents at each level but they don't get necessary attention or incentives to carry on their sports training. In association with sporting association across the state, there must be over 10,000 athletes in SAAP pipeline of competitive sports training. At this point athletes train either for fitness or their own inner aspiration to achieve something. Competitions are held at various levels and winners are felicitated appropriately, but what about rest of the year? In the economic condition that we are in, most of these athletes can't even afford proper kit or even nutrition.

We need to find a way to keep their training going. 100% of sports training expenses of sports academy students is taken care by SAAP, still there are thousands of other students who need support to sustain their training. SAAP has envisioned to identify top 5 students in 6 disciplines and 10 in athletics each from 13 districts and provide them scholarship worth INR 3000 per month for a period of 3 years.

Expectation from CSR

Although the current government is very keen on sports and is giving proper attention to it, proper funds are getting sanctioned for it. One can never be sure how long this is going to last. Perspective of a government can change at any time. It becomes necessary to ensure training of these kids. It is for this that SAAP has turned to corporate to pitch in and do their bit for the good of the society. This is their chance to make an impact where it matters the most.

Following table shows the no. of athletes and disciplines that are going to be eligible for Scholarship at this stage.

Sports Disciplines	No. of students eligible	Scholarship per month	Scholarship per month
Badminton	65	3000	1.95
Tennis	65	3000	1.95
Football	65	3000	1.95
Volleyball	65	3000	1.95
Kho-Kho	65	3000	1.95
Kabaddi	65	3000	1.95
Athletics	130	3000	3.9
Total no. of eligible athletes	520		
Total Scholarship per month(INR Lakh)	15.6		
Total Scholarship per year (INR Lakh)	187.2		

Based on their intent and appetite CSR donor can choose to fund any or all of the above mentioned disciplines for a period of three years.

Benefits to the donor

SAAP is a State sports authority with stadium across the state. Dealing with over 30 sports disciplines. Each of these disciplines conduct sub-junior, junior and senior level competitions throughout the year across the state. These events are widely covered by local media. The CSR donor can expect the media coverage across the state in these events.

It is a matter of prestige to be associated with social cause. These students and their success story because of donor will be a positive branding exercise for the donor.

There are a lot of special events apart from the usual competitive sports, for example: yoga day celebration, IAS officers cup, CM's cup, Janmabhoomi event, which are either events for government officers or events to promote sports across state with large scale participation from general population. The donor can expect brand presence in these events.

The CSR donor can use the Stadium site for ad campaign shooting or product launch, of course the operational expenses to carry out these events will be incurred by the donor. They can of course use the infrastructure.

Apart from all this the tax benefits associated with CSR investments of course stands true.

Social Impact

To begin with the 520 athletes that are going to be benefited by this program. The ripple effect of their success and their hard work will have lasting effect. A whole new generation of athletes will take interest in sports because of these incentives. Even if a single athlete inspires 10 of his peers, we are talking about inspiring over 5000 athletes and then 50,000 and then 5lakh over the period of three years.

The aim of providing opportunity to play to every citizen isn't only about providing enough infrastructure for every citizen to play, it's about creating that fire within that would drive all of them to come out and find ways to participate. This is where it all begins. 10 Academies and a bunch of district stadiums, accompanied by playgrounds at each Mandal. Providing infrastructure and making sure they have enough money to carry on with their training is all that we can do at this point and let the fruits of this strategic initiative bloom in years to come.

They say if you want to excel in sports, choose your parents. What it means is , a large percentage of our performance comes from the genes that we carry. By motivating a larger percentage of population into sports , we are indeed modifying the genetic code of the state and creating a healthier and a more prosperous nation, nation where the productivity of each citizen is enhanced.

There is something Andhra Government is working on, the term is happiness index. The CSR donor can be one of the firsts to contribute to happiness index resulting out of sports.

Summary

Andhra Pradesh as a state, is focusing on sports as one of its priority subject. Large amount of investment has gone into creating sports infrastructure. With the change in government or its priorities this inflow of money into sports training is uncertain, thus it becomes important to find alternative solution to make sure that the athletes keep training. A large portion of these talented athletes are not in a proper financial condition to carry on with their training. They can't afford proper kit or even proper nutrition to complement their training efforts. It is through these scholarships, SAAP along with the CSR donor is going to ensure training of these aspirants for at least 3 years.

SAAP hereby invite CSR donors to take this step and help us ensure training of these aspirants.

