

G20 Role on Sports Probity

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Abstract

India assumed the G20 presidency on December 1, 2022, marked by hope, dreams, and aspirations. The theme of the presidency — *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (One Earth, One Family, One Future) suggests — we are committed to working towards healing our one world, creating harmony within our one family, and giving hope for our one future.

Good quality education is an essential tool for achieving a more sustainable world. Sport is being increasingly recognized as a tool for education, capacity-building and community engagement. Sport has the capacity to support vulnerable youth because it is structured around norms, behaviours and rules that are also desirable in the larger community. Sport for Development refers to the use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sports have played a significant role in escalating India's economic and social growth by Job creation, Infrastructure Development, Tourism, enhancing National unity and pride, Increasing Trade and Investment. From last few decades scientific and systematic doping appeared as the most serious wrongdoing in sports, Other sport-related corruption and crimes like bribery of officials of international sport organisations, organized crime within sport bodies, mafia infiltration, frauds in the assignment of major sport events and in the procurement for the related infrastructures, tax evasion and other financial crimes, all exposing corruption schemes are making headlines. Also match-fixing related to illegal betting and money laundering have become a major concern. Since The “dark side” of sports has emerged more and more Sport Integrity as an overarching issue has then taken a recognized form in the last few years. Corruption in sports has been acknowledged as an emerging risk area in the 2019-2021 G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) Action Plan. The Italian G20 Presidency highlighted the need to tackle with growing international efforts the threat that corruption poses to the integrity of sports and emphasized increased efforts to strengthen both the legal and policy framework affecting corruption in sports. The G20 initiative in this regard bears a special responsibility to support the sports sector in mitigating corruption risks as well as being a catalyst for promoting ethical values, especially among the youth. In this regard, the G20 led by example in addressing the challenge of corruption in sport by adopting the G20 High-Level Principles on Tackling Corruption in Sport.

KEYWORDS: G20, Anti Corruption Working Plan, Sports

Introduction

India assumed the G20 presidency on December 1, 2022, marked by hope, dreams, and aspirations. At present the world is facing several challenges, such as Covid-19, the threat of recession, and the climate crisis and is seeking answers to some of these pressing issues. The Indian presidency aims to build upon the efforts and outcomes of

earlier presidencies while foraying into newer areas of global cooperation to build a sustainable future for all. As the theme of the presidency — *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (One Earth, One Family, One Future) suggests — we are committed to working towards healing our one world, creating harmony within our one family, and giving hope for our one future.

Good quality education is an essential tool for achieving a more sustainable world. This was emphasized at the UN World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002 where the reorientation of current education systems was outlined as key to sustainable development. Education for sustainable development (ESD) promotes the development of the knowledge, skills, understanding, values and actions required to create a sustainable world, which ensures environmental protection and conservation, promotes social equity and encourages economic sustainability. The concept of ESD developed largely from environmental education, which has sought to develop the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours in people to care for their environment. The aim of ESD is to enable people to make decisions and carry out actions to improve our quality of life without compromising the planet. It also aims to integrate the values inherent in sustainable development into all aspects and levels of learning.

Sport is being increasingly recognized as a tool for education, capacity-building and community engagement, and in recent decades, sport-based development initiatives targeting youth have been on the rise. The benefits sport provides to individuals and communities are manifold. At the community level, sports can provide a platform for members of the community to come together, bridging ethnic, racial, religious and other divides, and can be a useful component of peacebuilding and social integration efforts.

Sport has the capacity to support vulnerable youth because it is structured around norms, behaviours and rules that are also desirable in the larger community. Participation in sports cultivates a sense of responsibility that can be applied to other areas of life. Youth who are no longer in the formal education system, young people susceptible and vulnerable to joining gangs, and youth who are isolated from other forms of youth engagement can often find a medium for engagement through sports. Sport offers young people the opportunity to acquire social capital through the development of contacts and networks. There is increasing recognition of the role that sport plays in bringing young people together and in promoting civic engagement and youth development.

Sports for Development refers to the use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The rise of sport-based development and peace-building projects in conflict-affected regions exemplifies how sport has proven capable of easing conflicts that might otherwise have escalated.

Sports is a source of inspiration and shared values, a factor of progress and human fulfilment that moves billions of people around the world. Sport is a fundamental driver for both economic growth and social inclusion, supporting the Sustainable Development Goals constituting the core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Sports impact on Economy

Sports can have a significant impact on a country's economy. Major sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, or Cricket world can bring in significant tourism revenue and create jobs in areas such as hospitality and transportation. Additionally, sports can drive investment in infrastructure, such as the construction of new stadiums or sports facilities.

Sports also have a broader impact on the economy by creating demand for related goods and services, such as sports merchandise, equipment, and media rights. The sports industry can also provide indirect benefits, such as increasing morale and national pride, which can positively impact consumer spending and investment.

However, it is important to note that the economic impact of sports can vary greatly depending on factors such as the size and scale of the event, local economic conditions, and the level of government support. Additionally, while some studies suggest that hosting major sporting events can bring short-term benefits to a country's economy, the long-term impact is often more difficult to quantify and can be more limited.

Sports for Sustainable Growth

Sports can contribute to a country's sustainable growth by providing numerous economic, social, and cultural benefits. Some of the ways that sports can help to promote sustainable growth include:

- **Economic development:** The sports industry can create jobs, drive investment in infrastructure, and attract tourism, all of which can stimulate economic growth and development.
- **Social cohesion:** Sports can help to bring communities together, promoting social cohesion and reducing conflicts. This can have a positive impact on a country's stability and overall well-being.
- **Health and wellness:** Sports participation can help to improve physical and mental health, leading to a more productive and sustainable population.
- **Education and skill development:** Sports can help to develop skills such as teamwork, leadership, and communication, which can be transferred to other areas of life and contribute to a country's overall human capital.
- **Environmental sustainability:** Sports organizations and events can also play a role in promoting environmental sustainability by implementing green initiatives and reducing their environmental footprint.

Impact of Sports on Indian Economy and Society

Sports have played a significant role in India's economic and social growth over the years. Some of the ways in which sports have helped India include:

- Job creation: The sports industry in India has created jobs in areas such as event management, hospitality, and sports merchandise, helping to stimulate economic activity and create employment opportunities.
- Infrastructure development: The growth of sports in India has driven investment in infrastructure, such as the construction of new stadiums, sports facilities, and training centers. The hosting of major sporting events can drive investment in infrastructure, such as the construction of new stadiums, hotels, and transportation systems.
- Tourism: Sports events can attract large numbers of visitors to a country, generating significant tourism revenue and helping to boost the local economy. In India international sporting events, such as the Commonwealth Games, have attracted large numbers of visitors to India, generating significant tourism revenue and helping to boost the local economy.
- Health and wellness: Sports participation can help to improve physical and mental health, leading to a more productive and sustainable population.
- National pride and unity: Sports have a unifying effect, bringing people together and promoting national pride. This can have a positive impact on a country's stability and overall well-being.
- Skill development: Sports can help to develop skills such as teamwork, leadership, and communication, which can be transferred to other areas of life and contribute to a country's overall human capital.
- Increased trade and investment: Major National and international sporting events can help to foster business and trade relationships within and between countries, leading to increased investment and economic growth.
- Branding and promotion: Sports events can provide an opportunity to showcase a country or region to the world, helping to improve its image and promote economic development.

From the 70s till the turn of the century, scientific and systematic doping appeared as the most serious wrongdoing in sports and featured high on media exposure. In the last fifteen-twenty years new phenomena of sport-related corruption and crimes have come to the headlines like bribery of officials of international sports organizations, organized crime within sports bodies, mafia infiltration, fraud in the assignment of major sports events, and in the procurement for the related infrastructures, tax evasion and other financial crimes, all exposing corruption schemes. In this context, match-fixing related to illegal betting and money laundering has become a major concern, since betting online amazingly expanded the capacity of criminal groups to operate through the dark internet from far away bases and through networks able to make huge profits along well-tested schemes.

Since 2015 other crimes in sports have also come to the fore, some directly or indirectly linked to corruption: violence, gender discrimination, child trafficking, minors abuses, racism, bullying, sexual harassment and other offenses to human rights, illegal labour conditions, lack of basic health and safety conditions for athletes and workers. The “dark side” of sports has emerged more and more. Sports Integrity

as an overarching concept and issue - a relatively recent topic - has then taken a recognized form in the last five years.

This alarming situation can be seen as the other side of the coin, looking at the enormous success of sport as social practice at the global level in the last four decades. From grassroots to high professional tournaments, cross-gender, involving all generations and social groups, the sport has become a business too, growingly affected by market dynamics. However, the ruling mechanisms have basically remained those conceived more than a century ago, when the sport was fully amateur.

G20 ACTION ON SPORT INTEGRITY

Sport is a source of shared values, a factor of progress and human fulfilment, a global economic and social feature that significantly affects billions of people. It is universally recognized as a powerful vehicle for education, health and inclusion. Malfeasance in this sector is particularly widespread and dangerous. Besides the criminal justice aspects, relevant per sector, its consequences have a harmful impact on Olympic-inspired values and on sports principles at large: their effects must then be appraised in a broader perspective. Illegality in sports is particularly detrimental to our societies because it undermines and corrodes the ethical values that sport embodies, also affecting the hopes and trust of younger generations, hence affecting the quality of communities as a whole.

Sports is a multi-billion dollar industry with intricate ties to public and private interests. High levels of public expenditure, and large-scale investment from sponsors, together with high-value media contracts, create an environment that presents significant corruption risks, including foreign bribery. These risks are particularly heightened when it comes to the selection and organization of major sporting events: from the selection of sites, land acquisition and construction, procurement and security contracts, to supply chains, media rights, sponsorship deals and financial management, these events carry high corruption risks throughout the entire life-cycle. Private sector involvement in large-scale contracts and expectations of strong financial returns further amplify the vulnerabilities surrounding the selection and organization of major sporting events. In this context, companies may also use sports sponsorship, hospitality and gifts to deepen relationships and advance marketing and communication strategies. These include lobbying and territorial rooting through local image/reputation building. The risks of corruption, bribery and related crimes are serious both in the regular sports seasons and tournaments and on special occasions of major sports events.

A modern approach to this issue should recognize, through a holistic vision, how new avenues of corruption thrive also in sports, both on the field and off the field: illegal betting, match-fixing, adjudication of major sports events or concessions like TV broadcasting rights through corruption or bribery, deviance of related public procurement, inter alia, are examples of illicit behaviours in this broad risk area. These multifaceted forms of unlawfulness often feature specific crimes, proportionate to the relevance of the business related to sport. These phenomena highlight the need for a broader view of corruption affecting sports, taking also into account the links between sports, organized crime and money laundering, and how such phenomena affect public and private integrity. Namely in the era of globalization and multilayered legal systems, preventing and fighting corruption in the world of sports becomes a

strategic endeavour that requires in-depth assessment and implementation, also according to the UN Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda.

The issue appears on the global agenda

The growing relevance of this objective at the policy level has recently inspired several multilateral initiatives such as, among others, the Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions concluded in Macolin on September 18, 2014; the launch of IPACS initiative at the UK Anticorruption Summit in London, in May 2016; the initial focus on this issue under the German G20 Presidency; the Resolutions on corruption and sport adopted at the last two CoSP UNCAC (in Vienna and Abu Dhabi) the consideration given in the framework of the OECD Anti Bribery Convention.

Corruption in sports has been acknowledged as an emerging risk area in the 2019-2021 G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) Action Plan. The increasing relevance of corruption in both professional and amateur sports has inspired at the policy level several multilateral initiatives such as, among others, the adoption of a political declaration by the first-ever special session of the United Nations General Assembly against corruption on 2 June 2021, which refers to the importance of tackling corruption in sport and the adoption of resolutions 7/8, entitled “Corruption in Sport” and 8/4, entitled “Safeguarding Sport from Corruption”, by the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption at its seventh and eighth session, in Vienna in 2017 and in Abu Dhabi in 2019.

The Italian G20 Presidency highlighted the need to tackle with growing international efforts the threat that corruption poses to the integrity of sports and emphasized increased efforts to strengthen both the legal and policy framework affecting corruption in sports. For that reason, it has chosen sports integrity as one of its priorities for the 2021 G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group activities.

The G20 initiative in this regard bears a special responsibility to support the sports sector in mitigating corruption risks as well as being a catalyst for promoting ethical values, especially among the youth. In this regard, the G20 led by example in addressing the challenge of corruption in sports by adopting the following G20 High-Level Principles on Tackling Corruption in Sports.

Principles on Tackling Corruption in Sport

Principle 1:

“Gather information to develop an evidence-based understanding of and raise awareness on corruption in sport”

Principle 2:

“Strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks to address corruption in sport more effectively”

Principle 3:

“Ensure effective law enforcement against corruption in sport”

Principle 4:

“Strengthen international cooperation among law enforcement, criminal justice and corruption prevention authorities, as well as lawmakers and policymakers to effectively tackle corruption in sport”

Principle 5:

“Tackle corruption in sport related to organized crime”

Principle 6:

“Support sports organizations to enhance governance, transparency and accountability and ensure the integrity of major sports events, including associated procurement”

G20 countries will endeavour to apply these principles by:

- Encouraging sports organizations and relevant private entities to ensure that specific risks related to governance and major sports events are assessed, where relevant, and encouraging the private entities and sports organizations to adopt anti-corruption ethics and compliance programs, including, where appropriate, making use of beneficial ownership information and promoting transparency related to contractors, sponsors and licensing, in line with domestic laws.
- Encouraging sports organizations, taking into account their structure and size, to establish sufficient internal controls to assist in preventing and detecting acts of corruption and to require periodic reporting and independent auditing of those sports organizations that receive public funds and to develop codes of conduct and conflict of interest policies for relevant members and due diligence procedures for their partners.
- Promoting trust and cooperation between sports organizations, law enforcement, criminal justice and corruption prevention authorities to effectively prevent and detect corruption in sport.
- Providing, where appropriate and in line with domestic laws, and any risk-based arrangements, the regulation of professional activities of agents, intermediaries, advisers and representatives of athletes and the transfer of athletes between clubs, associations, and sports organizations, to prevent corrupt conduct and unethical behaviour and ensure financial transparency, also through the development and adoption of codes of conduct.
- Exploring ways to improve customer due diligence by financial institutions, consistent with applicable domestic laws and regulations, with respect to customers who exercise a prominent function in an international sports organization, particularly where such customers’ transactions pose a heightened risk of corruption, money-laundering and other financial crimes.
- Promoting compliance of all sports organizations with anti-corruption legislation, where relevant and applicable, and encouraging them to adhere to the highest integrity standards.

G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan 2022-2024

In 2022-2024, the G20 has three overarching objectives for its anti-corruption agenda:

1. Promote the implementation of existing G20 commitments and treaty obligations to increase the impact of the international anti-corruption agenda.
2. Build on existing G20 anti-corruption commitments by developing further targeted actions on the topics where the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) can best add value through extensive consultation and joint contribution, and increase the impact of our work in the wider international community,
3. Meet new corruption challenges identified by the international community and promote actions to prevent and counter corruption in related areas.

Conclusion

The G20 emphasizes the need to tackle with growing international efforts the threat that corruption poses to the integrity of sports and to increase efforts to strengthen both the legal and policy framework affecting corruption in sports. The G20 initiative in this regard bears a special responsibility to support the sports sector in mitigating corruption risks as well as being a catalyst for promoting ethical values, especially among the youth.

In implementing this Action Plan, the ACWG will continue to build on its cooperation and engagement with relevant international organizations and bodies, in particular UNODC, OECD, FATF, WB and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The ACWG will also strengthen its cooperation with other organizations such as INTERPOL and the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units and its engagement with other stakeholders such as academia, civil society, media, and the private sector, and will continue to promote their important role and active participation in the fight against corruption highlighting national efforts in this field. For informing and promoting the implementation of anticorruption efforts, the ACWG will raise awareness of ACWG proceedings and make relevant information on the collective G20 anti-corruption progress publicly available. The ACWG will also continue and, as necessary, enhance its interaction and cooperation with other relevant work streams within the G20 and its active engagement with the B20, C20, W20, and Academia, as well as with other stakeholders, including non-G20 countries and regional groups and/or organizations.

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