

National Sports Policy of Sri Lanka

Preamble

If we trace back the history of sports in Sri Lanka, the year 1948 can be termed as a golden year as it was in that year that a Silver Medal was won by Sri Lanka at the International Olympic Games.

Duncan White won a Silver Medal in 400m hurdles in that year and thereafter, Sri Lankan sports have marched forward with many ups and downs on its way during the last 63 years. The highest award that Sri Lanka could win during the recent past was the winning of a Silver Medal by Susanthika Jayasinghe at Sydney Olympics in the year 2000, In between, Sri Lanka has won many awards at the Commonwealth Games, World Championship, Asian games and South Asian Games bringing credit to the country.

Winning the Cricket World Cup in 1996 and being runners up twice thereafter have taken Sri Lanka to greater heights as a world leader in Cricket.

But during the last decade or so, there had been some setbacks in Sri Lankan sports due to unavoidable reasons. Due to the war situation which prevailed in the country for over 3 decades and up-rising among the youths have prevented the Sri Lankan younger generation from drawing towards sports. But with the dawn of the long awaited peace in the country, the time has come to use sports for the greater good of the peace, unity and prosperity of the nation. In this regard ,there are ample opportunities of using Sports for the good health of the younger generation by sharpening their sports talents to make them an active and a disciplined lot who could march ahead with team spirit .Similarly , in our attempts to make Sri Lanka the “ Wonder of Asia ” it is necessary to provide infra-structure facilities required by the sports field in order to build it up to make Sri Lanka an attractive venue in sports which could contribute for the economic development of the country creating, in turn, a new sports culture.

With these broad objectives in view, and to develop the sports field in Sri Lanka on a systematic and a scientific footing, it is proposed to announce a national policy on sports. It is hoped that all concerned parties will abide by this policy.

It is proposed to develop many varieties of sports in Sri Lanka to make sports an active contributor to the economic development of the country. Sports could also be used for the development of tourism as especially the international fame and recognition achieved in cricket can be used for this purpose. Similarly golf, surfing and water sports have ideal opportunities and possibilities in Sri Lanka. In addition, motor racing, hill climbing, beach games and horse racing could be promoted in a big way and developed to attract tourists.

Another aspect is the development of sports related industries with the use of our raw material and talented craftsmanship Sports equipment which are in great demand and tools which have a ready market could be easily manufactured in Sri Lanka, having encouraged prospective investors to undertake their production.

We also can develop the human resources relating to sports so that they can work as in international trainers and sports instructors. There are ample opportunities in Sri Lanka to develop those activities.

The favourable climatic conditions prevailing in Sri Lanka could be used to make the country an International Training Center in sports for overseas sports persons throughout the year.

In this task, sports should be treated as a beneficial economic activity which requires analysis and provision of related support.

With these broad concepts in view and in consideration of all the above factors, it is proposed to declare Sports Policy for Sri Lanka to develop the field of sports on a systematic and a scientific footing. Accordingly, it is hoped that all parties connected to sports will act in terms of proposed sports policy.

Vision

Sri Lanka to be the strongest Asian Country in sports

Mission

**To be a nation of champions in sport
In a healthy, disciplined, unified and prosperous society**

Goals:

1. To make Sports an integral part of Sri Lankan Culture and Society.
2. To utilize Sports to enrich the quality of life, physical wellbeing and health of all Sri Lankans.
3. To provide knowledge, access and the opportunity for everyone to participate in Sports and enjoy its benefits.
4. To make available resources and appropriate infrastructure for the overall development of Sport.
5. To assist every Sri Lankan to achieve optimum potential in Sport and ensure that Sri Lanka's international image as a successful sporting nation is both viable and sustainable.
6. To develop a Sports Industry in Sri Lanka, create new employment and contribute to the promotion of economic growth.
7. To utilize the field of sports as one of the main foreign exchange earner of Sri Lanka.
8. To bring peace and communal harmony through the sports.

Prime Elements of the National Sports Policy:

1. Every citizen is a Sportsperson

Providing every Sri Lankan with knowledge of the values and benefits of Sports and access to sport facilities and programs so as to achieve high rates of mass participation in recreation and sports throughout the country.

Creating an interest in sports among the entire population, particularly the young people to ensure their improved physical and mental health throughout their whole life, embracing the qualities of discipline, team spirit, leadership and living in harmony with fellow citizens in a nation united and striving to maintain the highest standards of human values and endeavour.

2. New Sports Culture

Encouraging the establishment of a "Sports Culture" in Sri Lanka

A new culture is born through the thinking and actions of people. A sports culture is to be established by encouraging people to adopt sport as an integral part of their lives.

3. Priority for Good Health

Encouraging the implementation of better physical health programmes covering all aspects of the society.

In creating a healthy nation, highest priority to be given for the improvement of health and physical fitness of all citizens. In doing so, participation in sports and physical fitness programmes on a wider scale should be encouraged paying special attention for the consumption of local nutritious and a balanced diet which would eventually create a healthy nation with increased productivity.

4. Sports for Recreation

The attraction of individuals and groups to participate in recreation is a means to attract them to mass participation in Sport and provide them a pathway to achieve higher levels of skill in more intense physical activity and if desired, to engage in competitive sports.

Since Sport follows established structures and conforms to rules and regulations, it is necessary to promote recreational activities solely to attract individuals and groups to take up participation in physical activity. This serves as a low level entry

point to organised sport activity, thereby providing a pathway to achieve more advanced competencies and skills and increase the number of sportspersons registered for training in competitive sport.

5. Sports for Peace and Development

Giving priority to Sports for sustainable peace and social development.

Acknowledging that Sports has the potential to unite people, break down racial and ethnic barriers, eliminate discrimination and build stronger, healthier and happier communities, Sports will be used to accelerate and enhance the socio-economic development of Sri Lanka.

6. A Bright Future for the Sportive Youth

Encouraging groups of youth to take up sports, guiding them to the betterment of their physical and mental health and the development of their productivity, particularly as they form the future of the country.

As the future of the country depends on the younger generation, priority should be given to utilise Sport to engage them in meaningful activity, to equip them with knowledge to assume responsibility for the maintenance of good health throughout their future lives, provide them skills through sport to be gainfully employed in the workforce, to achieve higher work outputs and to live in harmony with their fellow citizens for the greater good of Sri Lanka.

7. Identification of talented sportspersons

All school children and youth should be assessed to determine the potential they have for achieving high performance in Sport.

It is important to subject all children and youth early to both, the established (a) subjective and (b) objective talent identification methodology to determine their true performance capacity and potential to achieve elite levels at major competitions.

8. From School to Sports

Giving priority for sports education, training and physical health within the school curriculum.

In giving children an all round and balanced education, priority should be given for conducting a comprehensive physical education program in schools so that all necessary physical features and skills are developed, academic performance in the

classroom enhanced and a foundation upon which mass participation in sport is built.

9. Sports clubs for Villages

All aspects of sport should be developed and taken to Grama Niladhari and Divisional Secretariat levels so that the whole country benefits from rare and specialist knowledge, expertise and experience found only in Colombo or other parts of the country.

A network of agencies and officials must be established with systems and processes put in place for the dissemination of knowledge, expertise, experience and resources from one place to all others so that the entire population of Sri Lanka is serviced and benefits from the investment made in sports.

10. Assistance to Sports Clubs

Strengthening Provincial and National Sports Associations must be encouraged by the creation of more sports clubs located throughout the country.

Activity aimed at developing mass participation in community level sport must be consolidated by establishing pathways for new athletes to either strengthen existing clubs or support the creation of new clubs so that membership in all Provincial and National Sports Associations is increased.

11. Worldwide knowledge in Sports

Creating opportunities for sportspersons to gain access to new foreign training methodology, sport technology and specialist knowledge in all applicable fields must be pursued to enable them to compete on equal terms with overseas athletes at major international competitions

The acquisition of the latest technical knowledge, training methods and other expertise is important to win at international level sports events. Sportspersons should be assisted to gain access to all necessary resources whilst at the same time continually up-skilling local experts and building human capacity in Sri Lanka to conduct research and develop necessary expertise on its own at future points of time.

12. Women to the forefront in sports

Providing opportunities for women to engage in sports

The importance, value and benefits of participation in Sport should be illustrated to all women and steps taken to provide them access and opportunity to participate in sport for their own physical wellbeing, enjoyment and if applicable, achievement of the highest level of performance at major sporting events. It is also important to increase the percentage of female athletes in the Sri Lanka Team participating at major events such as World Championships, the SAF, Asian, Commonwealth and Olympic Games.

13. Mature aged participants in sports

Providing opportunities for older age people to engage in sports

As people age, they are more prone to illness and need family support. Organising sport activities for retirees and mature aged persons helps them not only to delay the onset of common illnesses that cost themselves and Government money but also to increase mass participation in sport with their direct involvement, usually at non-peak times in sports facilities. There are several Masters level competitions and this is known to deliver an economic benefit of the host location.

14. Persons with Special needs to the forefront in Sports

Encouraging persons with special needs to take part in sports for the development of their mental and physical health, recreation and personality development.

Persons needing special attention due to natural causes or social calamities should be treated as an important section of the society and hence it is necessary to encourage them and provide facilities for them to engage in sports as a means of enjoyment, recreation, personality development and excellence at sporting competitions. Thus, they will form an integral part of the community. Sports bodies must establish mechanisms to integrate disabled persons in their mainstream activities.

15. A strong Sports Organisational Network through Institutional development

Establishing and streamlining the legal framework of sports Association development of management structures and sports programs.

It is important to strengthen the legal, governance, management and operational aspects relating to Sports Institutions and agencies so as to ensure that they are dynamic, responsive and efficient in sport development, keep abreast of modern social trends and deliver their target outputs efficiently. To ensure accountability,

action should be taken to ensure good governance, transparency in all activity and decision making and productivity in all institutes concerning sports with special emphasis on respect for law and decorum. A mechanism also needs be established to ensure uniformity and collaboration between the various agencies involved in the administration of sport.

16. Independence of Sports Organizations

Creating the environment necessary to ensure the independence of sports organization.

It is necessary to introduce legal provisions to ensure the election of independent persons to the sports organizations

17. A collective Approach for the Development of Sports

Taking action to develop sports through a coordinated approach by government and provincial council ministries in charge of sports.

It should be mandatory to implement a coordinated approach by all institutes dealing with sports in government and provincial councils and plan out sports development programs to include all national sports associations, provincial, district and regional level sports organisations in this program. A National Strategic Plan for the overall development of sports should be established and followed by all identified stakeholders.

18. Sports Facilities in Villages

Encouraging the extension of physical facilities required for sports development throughout the country with the objective of taking sports to the village.

Development of sports facilities at village level must be undertaken according to a National Sport Infrastructure Development Plan with a view to uplifting sport talent of village youth, thus enabling them to receive appropriate training and expertise to win international sports competitions. A database of all facilities identifying their location the number in use, the type of sports serviced at each location and their structure, features and standards must be maintained. The overall maintenance and life-cycle costs must also be kept so that replacements are scheduled and all facilities remain fully functional at all times.

19. Pride of place for Traditional Sports

Encouragement to popularise and develop traditional national sports.

National sports originating from olden days which are a part and parcel of Sri Lankan culture should be cherished, popularized and the traditional knowledge

about them preserved in society and protected for posterity. A programme of collecting and listing them should be commenced for their conservation.

20. Human Resources Development for Productivity

Up-skilling people, developing capacity and human resources in the various fields of Sport serves to establish an effective sports system that can be employed by public institutions working for sports development.

Performing management development activities directed at improving productivity in Government institutions involved in sports promotion and activities particularly leading to human resource development in such institutions are to be encouraged. It is imperative to establish an Accreditation and Licensing System whereby people are encouraged to obtain technical and administrative training in sport, follow pathways to upgrade their competence, secure higher levels of qualification and are able to be recognised through certification. A database must record the number of persons engaged as coaches, officials and administrators at the various skill levels, the locations at which they are deployed and continually update them with new developments applicable to their area of work.

21. Assistance of Volunteers to sports

Encouraging citizens to volunteer in sport must be developed and encouraged.

A System to

(a) recruit

(b) retain and

(c) evaluation of volunteers who are involved in sport must be established. This will help to increase the number of persons working on a daily basis and cost effectively support all sports agencies in the delivery of their programs throughout the country.

22. Sports Medical Facilities for All

Providing assistance for the extension of sports medical facilities throughout the country.

Action should be taken to provide sports medical facilities at Provincial and District levels to service all those who are engaged in sports activities. Steps should also be taken to provide an educational service to athletes and coaches with medical knowledge so that injury is in the first place prevented, rehabilitation

better managed and sport medical guidance given to support the attainment of elite level performance in competition.

23. Adherence to International Standards and Conventions

Encouragement will be given to all sports associations and institutions involved in the development of sports to comply with the International Olympic Charter, the strict following of selection criteria and processes, the training and management of sports persons and to act in accordance with international regulations.

Processes relating to selection, training, management, disciplinary action and the organization of sports events should be done according to international sports standards and all related work should be conducted honoring the International Olympic Charter.

24. Prohibition of use of Drugs and *stimulants*

Laws regarding the use of prohibited stimulants and drugs will be implemented in terms of the World Anti Doping Agency.

Action will be taken to ensure that the sports persons of Sri Lanka abide by the United Nations International Convention Against Doping in Sport and the World Anti Doping Agency's Code on the use of prohibited stimulants and drugs in sport. A sport drug education strategy will be implemented in the first instance while steps will also be taken in Sri Lanka to empower an institution to investigate, test and prosecute persons involved in the manufacture, distribution and / or use of drugs prohibited in sport.

25. Government Assistance for International Competition

Sports persons taking part in SAARF Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and Olympic Games to be given total government assistance.

Total government assistance will be given in accordance with a prescribed system to sports persons who participate in major International Competitions as well as for government and other sports association officials who are required to participate in them. The provision of such assistance must be contractual whereby the recipient of such assistance must abide by pre-determined conditions that are agreed to in advance and similarly an agreed service to the country is provided as appropriate upon their return.

26. Talented sports persons to be given higher education privileges

School children who win national sports competitions should be given special privileges to enter universities and other institutes of higher education.

When seeking admission to universities and other institutes of higher education privileges should be afforded to those who have won National and International level achievements.

27. Athlete career education

Special assistance and concessions will be granted to athletes who win and achieve set performance levels at national sports competitions to further themselves when their term of competing in sport ends.

Athletes who devote much of their early life to long spells of training and competition will be granted special privileges and concessions to complete their normal school education and to gain entry to in university courses and other educational institutions conducting courses of study which facilitate future employment.

28. Higher Education and research in Sport

Assistance will be provided for the development of national institutes awarding degrees, post graduate degrees, conducting research and encouraging work in collaboration with similar local and international institutes.

Acting in collaboration with national and international universities and research institutes that award degrees, post graduate degrees and conduct research activities in sports, the National Sports Academy and the National Institute of Sports Science will be restructured so that courses in Sports Science, Sport Medicine and in allied fields may be commenced at Sri Lankan Universities and undergraduate and postgraduate degrees may be awarded.

29. Special privileges for World Class Sportspersons

Winners at major international events will be given special concessions to secure government jobs in the sports sector and special incentives provided to get employment in the private sector.

In providing employment opportunities in the Public Sector as well as in the Private Sector, special privileges will be given to those who have won local and international sporting events of a particular standard and special concession will also be granted to assist them with participation in training and competition whilst being employed.

30. Recognitions of Veterans

Veteran sportspersons who have won laurels at SAARC Games, Asian Games, World Championships, Commonwealth Games and Olympic Games to be honoured

In recognition of all proficient sportspersons who have won at major international competitions, national awards will be given to them together with financial incentives in accordance with prescribed regulations.

31. Assistance of the Veterans in Sport

While encouraging proficient sportspersons who have won international awards to remain active in sport, they will be gainfully employed so that their expertise could be shared with new comers.

Systematic programs will be organised to enable proficient sports persons to be made available through employment to share their expert knowledge and experience with new developing sportspersons.

32. Protection of Proficient Sports Persons

Introduction of a social security program for sportspersons who have won national and international awards and bestowed credit to Sri Lanka.

An appropriate national conservation program aimed at the protection and welfare of sportspersons who have sacrificed much, won national and international awards and have brought credit to Sri Lanka must be established.

33. An Independent Tribunal for Sports

An independent Tribunal and an Arbitration Board will be set up to inquire to in disputes regarding sports

An independent Tribunal and an Arbitration Board will be established to settle disputes arising in the sports field and disciplinary matters to be attended to in an independent and transparent manner.

34. Tax Exemption for Sports

Sports material and equipment imported by National Sports Associations and government institutions dealing with sports to be exempted from all taxes.

Sports materials and equipment, sports medical equipment, medicine and nutrients imported by Government institutions relating to sports for the use of sports associations and their members must be given tax exemption.

35. Tax Relief to those who Assist Sports

Tax relief to be granted to private institutions which provide various forms of assistance for the development of sport.

Upon authentication by the Ministry of Sport, Tax relief should be granted to the private sector which provides various forms of assistance to relevant government institutions and sports organisations for the development of sports.

36. Commercial basis for Sports Associations

Maintenance of economically viable Sports Associations as productive units.

Encouragements to be given to develop sports associations as commercially viable units in order to develop a sports related economy.

37. Opportunities for sports in each Workplace

The utilisation of Sport in the work place must be encouraged and the achievement of benefits within the workforce realised.

Sport impacts positively on the health, wellbeing and morale of the workforce. For this purpose it is necessary to provide the time, necessary facilities, support and environment required by the work force.

38. Priority for Sports in the Mass Media

Positive media coverage for sports and sportspersons, publishing sport education material and creating enthusiasm among the masses is a role media outlets must be encouraged to undertake. The media must adequately promote and offer ongoing support for the development of Sport by ensuring balanced, impartial and constructive reporting of sport news, sport material and matters related to sportspersons and sports officials.

The print and electronic media must give wide scale and constructive coverage to popularise sport among the people in a manner that people are informed and are attracted to participate in sport. The training of Sports Journalists and ongoing interaction must follow a strategic path.

39. A National Sports Information Centre and Muséum

A National Sport Information Centre equipped with modern technology and adequate resources for the accessing and capturing of all necessary information on local and foreign sports news, sport technical information and developments, research and statistics, rules and regulations governing sports must be established.

While the National Sports Information Centre (NSIC) collects and stores all necessary information, statistics and data, it must establish a mechanism to disseminate relevant information to athletes, coaches, officials and administrators in a timely manner so that they are regularly updated with modern trends and can benefit from new knowledge. It will also be a function of the NSIC to conserve and display historical sports documents, visual images, material, equipment and other appropriate artefacts for prosperity.

40. Code of Ethics for Sports

Introduction of a code of ethics pertaining to sports which should be followed by all involved in sports.

A code of ethics should be introduced to the sports to be declared and followed by all concerned in order to protect its honour and integrity so that all persons abide by it.

41. Sri Lanka to be an Ideal Venue for Sports

Sri Lanka will be marketed as an ideal location to hold international sports events and will be encouraged to build a sport tourism industry.

Using the central location of Sri Lanka, its natural attributes and its vast resources, Sri Lanka should be made an attractive venue to hold international sports competitions through which the new medium of sport tourism can be developed so as to generate an economic impact.

42. Sports for Tourist Attraction

Providing assistance to encourage sports which can attract tourists

With a view to making Sri Lanka a Tourist Paradise, promoting, encouraging and giving priority to sports and adventures experiences as a means of popularizing entertainment.

43. Making Sports Related Industries a Priority item in the Economy.

Providing incentives for the production and export of sports related equipment and services.

Providing relief and encouraging industries manufacturing sports related materials and export promotion and import substitution sports equipment using local raw materials and man power to earn foreign exchange by creating employment opportunities in allied sports fields.

44. Opportunities through Sports

Having identified employment opportunities in the field of sports, and providing vocational trainings of international standards, employment opportunities to be provided in the local and foreign sports field.

Identification of employment opportunities such as experienced professional trainers, persons experienced in the medical field, sports managers, event managers, physiotherapists and masseurs. Having given professional training in the respective fields, development of human resources for local and foreign employment opportunities.

45. Economic Benefits through Recreational Sports.

Providing encouragement to popularize recreational sports aimed at economic benefits.

Providing encouragement to popularize recreational sports with a view to attracting local and foreign sportsmen to generate economic benefits by the introduction of various recreational sports in a creative manner using various resources and opportunities available in various parts in Sri Lanka.