

## **CII SCORECARD**

25 March 2022

### **REMARKS**

**Ambassador Tanmaya Lal**

Greetings from Stockholm

It is exciting to be part of this discussion.

I would like to thank Mr. Goswami and his colleagues for the invitation to participate in this year's CII-Scorecard.

It was interesting to listen to the insights shared by Mr. Goswami, especially regarding the huge potential of the development of sports in India and its economic and employment implications.

May I also thank the CII team for reaching out to our friends and partners from Sweden to join this innovative platform.

It was also good to listen to Ms. Anna Iwarsson, Vice Chairperson of the Swedish Sports Confederation. Especially her remarks about 'competere', our cooperation in public health and opportunities in SportsFinTech.

It was fascinating to listen to the iconic athlete Ms. Lovlina and her thought provoking remarks about the systemic challenges and suggestions on the way forward.

And I am happy to see my dear colleague Ambassador Klas Molin also joining this panel.

I would like to speak about how sports is changing and what that means for possible collaborations in research & management, technology and investment in addition to conventional coaching and training.

When we think of sports, images of competitive encounters played under precise rules in a largely friendly spirit exemplified by the Olympic movement, come to mind.

With the advance of globalisation, technology and business are transforming sports.

From being a recreational activity, Sports today is Big Business globally. *Partly the reason why the Confederation of Indian Industry is the host for this event.*

This transformation is ongoing and accelerating.

In addition to individual glory and national triumphs, fan loyalties are now much more global in several sports – from iconic clubs at professional leagues, to legendary brands for instance in formula racing.

E-sports, requiring different skills, are gaining huge following.

Today when we think of sports we also think of Sports entrepreneurs, SportsTech startups, investors, sporting leagues, sponsors, media houses, marketing, research and management institutions.

International sports itself is becoming ever more competitive. It will increasingly take much more than traditional methods and processes to succeed.

At the same time, the expanding sports ecosystem offers opportunities for more structured, varied and professional career paths to attract talent.

Audiences, fans, sports stars, leagues & rights holders, sponsors and media are all becoming global. Work from anywhere has given a further boost to this.

Many non-traditional sports such as adventure sports and spin offs of existing sports are growing faster. Next Olympics will also feature skateboarding, surfing, sport climbing and breaking.

Today, technologies including AI (*Artificial Intelligence*) and data analytics, AR (*Augmented Reality*), and Blockchain deeply influence how athletes train and compete, how fans engage and consume content, and how world-class venues are constructed.

An associated technology field is sensors, which are increasingly embedded in wearables & textiles for performance & health, fan engagement, venues and media.

E-sports, measurement platforms for data and analytics and biometrics are attracting big investment.

Data is the new Gold. Also true for sports.

Fan engagement, especially, is becoming increasingly important for clubs, athletes and federations for increasing and diversifying revenue streams.

5G will further fuel these transformative trends.

We could look at Sweden and India against the backdrop of this transformative phase to see where we could work together.

Sweden, despite its relatively small population, is among the leading sporting nations of the world of all time. Sweden has a long tradition of sporting successes both in individual and team disciplines and has won medals at all Olympic games since 1908.

The strength of the Swedish sports is attributable to the professional institutional and infrastructure base, with Swedish Sports Confederation serving as the umbrella organization for organized sports.

Sweden is also a leading innovative nation. Sweden consistently ranks as #2 on Global Innovation Index of WIPO. It is among the top-ranking economies on the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum. Stockholm is among the leading international centres for Sportstech innovation according to KPMG.

Research in sports, including medicine, is conducted at various institutions & universities in Sweden.

In this context, we are in dialogue with the Centre for Sports and Business (CSB) at Stockholm School of Economics, one of the leading and unique institutions.

CSB partners with all major Swedish sporting federations and has a large international network of researchers, executives and athletes. They harness data from sports, associations and businesses to generate research with practical relevance for sports and business. They organise Sports Tech Start-up Accelerator Programmes and Test Beds for sporting infrastructure; provide coaching on starting sports businesses to offer a different career path for young athletes and others. CSB also offers elective courses for students focusing on intersection of sports and business. They represent a unique package of possibilities.

The sports scene in India is also transforming very fast.

Several sports startups, including in sportstech field are coming up in India and becoming successful.

A number of professional leagues have come up in various sports, including traditional sports such as Kabaddi, which are extremely popular and successful with large revenue streams.

Young Indian women and men are now making their mark at the international stage across a much wider range of sports than before, for instance even in gymnastics, fencing or sailing. They present new role models.

A series of recent movies on sporting successes are also exciting and inspiring younger generation.

Many high-profile international tournaments and global sporting events are now being hosted in India. Impressive new sports infrastructure is coming up.

The Government is putting much more emphasis on fitness and sports through mass campaigns such as Fit India and 'Khelo India' or Play India.

There is growing awareness and engagement in health and fitness activities at a much wider level than before.

All this combined with India's young and aspirational demographic profile, strong economic growth and startup ecosystem offer huge opportunities and scope of collaboration, including between India and Sweden.

I would like to recall here some memorable sporting encounters between athletes from India and Sweden since the early 1950s when Indian footballers trained barefoot in Stockholm Olympic Stadium.

The Indian badminton legend Prakash Padukone won the 1980 Swedish Open.

India and Sweden faced off in Davis Cup tennis final in 1987. Vijay Amritraj, Ramesh Krishnan and Leander Paes have played with Björn Borg, Stefan Edberg and Mats Wilander at Grand Slam tournaments.

In recent years, Swedish professional football players including Freddie Ljungberg have played in Indian Super League. Swedish wrestler Sofia Mattson participated in the Pro Wrestling League in India.

In Formula-E, Mahindra Racing won its first race in 2017 with Felix Rosenqvist of Sweden driving their car.

Neeraj Chopra, who won India's first ever athletics Olympic gold last year, did his final training in Uppsala in Sweden before leaving for Tokyo.

The Indian women football team and the Under 18 team are being ably coached by Thomas Dennerby from Sweden, who also brought the team to Sweden a few months back. The Indian Boxing Team's High-Performance Coach is also from Sweden.

I understand that there have been some preliminary contacts in the field of ice hockey. And today, in a good though belated beginning, an Indian skiing team is arriving in Stockholm to train for the first time in Sweden.

Given the increasingly complex and expanding ecosystem of sports, innovation, technology and business, where successful interlinkages will increasingly determine success at the global stage, collaborations are vital.

There are clearly a lot of exciting opportunities for collaboration between various stakeholders in India and Sweden going forward.

Not only in terms of playing in leagues, training and coaching, but in the wider ecosystem of innovation, technology, human resource development, research, business management, investment and sustainability.

We are confident that this edition of CII Scorecard will catalyse some of these discussions, which can then grow into concrete partnerships.

Thank You.