Karnataka Sports Policy spells out goals including brand image, gold at Olympics & good governance

Biju Babu Cyriac | TNN | Apr 22, 2016, 05.50 PM IST

BENGALURU: A new statutory sports body - the Karnataka Kreeda Aayoga, Karnataka Sports Act and a Sports History and Heritage Museum are some of the main recommendations in the new sports policy formulated by the Karnataka Knowledge Commission co-chaired by sporting legends Prakash Padukone and Rahul Dravid. The policy which was submitted to the government recently, recommends a complete framework for the development of sports in the state over a stipulated period.

Based on four pillars — 1. sports laws and governance; 2. sports support, events and infrastructure; 3. sports resources & knowledge and 4. sports commerce and industry — the document envisages 15 goals to be achieved by the state by 2030. They include implementation of best practices in the governance of sports bodies which would necessitate passing of sports laws, state athletes winning at least four gold at the Olympics/Paralympics and the state team in the top-3 of medals tally at every National Games, centres of sporting excellence at existing Universities, at least 1,000 qualified coaches and raising Bengaluru as a global sports hub.

The new Sports Act will address various issues in sports governance with sports federations expected to work on the principles of good governance - financial transparency, openness and appointment of professional staff being some of them. The Act will also prescribe the best practices including addressing conflict of interest, ethics officers, terms for office-bearers and performance-based annual appraisal.

Regarding sports access, it says "all sports facilities in the state constructed with the help of public funds will be made available for the general public under specific terms of usage."

Karnataka Kreeda Aayoga

The proposed Aayoga (commission) will be a statutory body managed by high quality professionals with experience in sports governance and appointed for a limited tenure. "The body headed by a professional CEO shall advise the state government, DYES and state federations on various matters. It shall operate as an autonomous link between the government, DYES and federations to monitor the development of sports at all levels," the recommendation said.
"The KKA shall institute five sub-committees - the Sports co-ordination council, the sports in education council, the sports ethics and integrity council, the sports disputes council and the sports commerce council. Each of these shall be responsible for the execution and development of a particular aspect of the policy," the policy states.

The KKA will in turn report to the board of patrons which will consist of the chief minister, sports minister, sports secretary and an eminent sportsperson from the state. The board of patrons and the Kreeda CEO shall institute an advisory council for guidance on the implementation of the policy. The council, to be co-chaired by the sports minister, will have representatives of sports bodies and also 4-5 eminent persons involved in Karnataka sport (see graphic).

The KKA will also create and own a brand - Bengaluru Open - which will be licensed to private enterprises in different sports.

**Athlete Carding**

To improve tracking of elite athletes from the state and to ensure optimum allocation to athletes, "the state will introduce an athlete carding scheme whereby those identified through statewide talent search schemes will be identified and accredited. The carding system will entail distribution of smart cards to athletes and also a centralized database that lists and tracks the performance of carded athletes." Also, cash awards will be based on tiered-structure with Olympics & Paralympics at the top. The South Asian Games is listed at No.6 just one step above National Championships.

The current awards scheme will be made more elaborate with sponsors roped in. The annual awards function will be broadcast live. A separate award is also proposed for coaches whose wards excel at the international level.

Amongst other recommendations are a high performance unit with experts in rehab, conditioning, nutrition, physiology and sports psychology, pension scheme, coach development programme, brand ambassadors, a sports museum and a sports development fund. It has also recommended an astronomical increase in budget allocation for sports "from the existing Rs 90 crore to Rs 1,000 crore for the next three years to meet the targets of this period."