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Beyond the Game
White Paper Series
Paper 2 - The Telangana Model

SYMPOSIUM

S Y M P O S I U M

Beyond the Game

White Paper Series · Paper 2

The Telangana *Model*

A state-led template for Indian sports reform.

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*Foreword***By Sri Jayesh Ranjan, IAS***Special Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana*

On the second of August 2025, Hon'ble Chief Minister Sri A. Revanth Reddy unveiled the Telangana Sports Policy 2025 at the inaugural Telangana Sports Conclave in Hyderabad. The policy committed the state to a five-pillar framework — Governance and Organisation, Sports Ecosystem, Long-Term Athlete Development, Infrastructure, and Skills Development and Career Pathways. It was the product of two years of careful consultation. It was also, in the considered view of the state government, a public answer to a private question that had nagged at Telangana's leadership for some time: if Indian sport is to be reformed, must the reform always begin at the Centre?

Eight months later, on the thirtieth of April 2026, Symposium convened its second edition at the heart of Hyderabad. I had the privilege of moderating the panel. The conversation that evening was one of the most candid public discussions of Indian sport's structural challenges that I have witnessed in my career. It produced what I believe to be the most useful diagnosis of the federation question that any Indian forum has assembled — the analysis that constitutes Paper 1 of this series.

This paper, Paper 2, is the affirmative companion. It argues that the diagnosis is not the end of the matter. It argues that a state — this state — has already begun to demonstrate, in operational terms, what a credible answer to the federation question can look like. Telangana hosts the Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy, the institution that has delivered two of India's three Olympic badminton medals. Telangana hosts the Sania Mirza Tennis Academy, recently transformed into a high-performance programme. Telangana hosts Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League. Telangana is home to Mohammed Siraj, to Nikhat Zareen, to Deepthi Jeevanji, to Pradeep Singh, to a generation of athletes who have brought distinction to the country. These are not accidents. They are the outcome of a sporting ecosystem that the state has cultivated for over two decades and is now, with the 2025 Policy, codifying as institutional commitment.

The Sports Policy 2025 also created the Telangana Sports Development Fund and a fourteen-member Board of Governors that includes Mr. Abhinav Bindra, Mr. Pullela Gopichand, Shri Kapil Dev, Mr. Bhaichung Bhutia, and Shri Sanjeev Goenka. The fact that the leading minds of Indian sport were willing to lend their names to a state-level governance board is itself a signal. The Centre's reform architecture — the Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 and the National Sports Governance Act 2025 — has created the legal and policy space within which a state government can now operate with seriousness. Telangana has chosen to do so.

Symposium publishes this paper not as Telangana's account of itself, but as Symposium's considered reading of what the Telangana model has begun to look like, and what it could become. The recommendations in this paper are Symposium's; the state government welcomes them in the spirit of constructive engagement. We invite other states to read this paper as a working hypothesis — one that we hope will be tested, refined, and adapted across the country in the decade ahead.

Indian sport's next decade will not be reformed only from New Delhi. It will be reformed in the states that choose to translate the Centre's architecture into operational practice. Telangana has chosen. The question this paper takes up is what that choice now requires.

Sri Jayesh Ranjan, IAS

Special Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana · Hyderabad

Chapter 1

The Setting

*A conversation in Hyderabad — and the state that was hosting it***THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE***Telangana did not stumble into the Symposium evening; the state has been preparing, for over a decade, to become the venue at which Indian sport's structural questions are taken seriously — and the place at which their answers begin.*

On the evening of 30 April 2026, Symposium convened its second edition in Hyderabad. The theme was Beyond the Game: The Business of Athletic Excellence. Paper 1 of this series tells the story of what was discussed and what it produced — a diagnostic case for federation reform that this paper takes as its starting point. This paper tells a different story: the story of the state that was hosting the conversation.

The composition of the room mattered. The moderator was a serving Special Chief Secretary of the Government of Telangana with the unusual portfolio combination of Metropolitan and Urban Development on one side and Youth Advancement, Tourism, Culture and Sports Development on the other. Two of the panel's most consequential voices — Mr. Abhinav Bindra and Mr. Pullela Gopichand, both sitting members of the Telangana Sports Development Fund Board of Governors — had a structural relationship with the state that long predated the evening. Symposium's founder, Mr. Girish Mallpani, is a Hyderabad businessman who built MPM Group in this city. The Vote of Thanks was delivered by Mr. K. K. Maheshwari, a Symposium trustee and the serving President of the Telangana State Table Tennis Association. The state was not a backdrop. It was a stakeholder.

Six months before that evening, on the second of August 2025, the Government of Telangana had unveiled its own Sports Policy at the inaugural Telangana Sports Conclave. The Policy was not a press release. It was a fifty-page document, developed through consultation with the Sports Authority of Telangana, the Telangana Olympic Association, the Sports Authority of India, the Indian Olympic Association, and a roster of athletes and administrators that included most of the panel that would later assemble at the Symposium evening. Mr. Bindra spoke at the Conclave. So did Mr. Gopichand. So did Olympian Gagan Narang. The Sports Policy 2025 named five pillars — Governance and Organisation, Sports Ecosystem, Long-Term Athlete Development, Infrastructure, and Skills Development and Career Pathways — and committed the state to ₹465 crore in sporting expenditure for the 2025-26 fiscal year, a ₹100 crore increase over the prior year and, by the Chief Minister's own statement, a sixteen-fold increase over the historical baseline.

In other words: by the time Symposium convened in Hyderabad on the thirtieth of April 2026, the Telangana government had already done what Paper 1 of this series argues most Indian states have not done. It had committed, formally, to a state sports policy that translates the central architecture into operational practice. The Symposium evening was therefore not a beginning. It was a continuation — and, in important respects, a

public test of whether the Telangana approach could withstand the scrutiny of a panel that included the country's most credentialled sports voices and a sports historian whose habit is to be sceptical of state claims.

The panel did not, in the end, scrutinise Telangana's record on the evening. The conversation took the wider national frame — federation governance, cricket's exception, the central reform architecture — and Telangana receded into the background. But for those who were paying attention, the relationship between the room and the state was clear. The state was sponsoring the dialogue, not because it needed validation, but because it understood that the dialogue itself was a public good. Symposium provided the institutional frame within which a serious national conversation could occur in Hyderabad. Telangana, by hosting and supporting that frame, was making a quieter point: that the work of Indian sport's reform is now national, and the leadership of that reform may yet emerge from outside New Delhi.

This paper takes that proposition seriously. The chapters that follow audit what Telangana has already built (Chapter II), examine why the state is structurally positioned to lead (Chapter III), document the Sports Policy 2025 and its commitments (Chapter IV), situate the state's work within the central reform architecture (Chapter V), and propose an operating model and a five-year roadmap (Chapters VI and VII). The paper closes by considering how the Telangana model could be adapted by other states (Chapter VIII).

Symposium publishes this paper as the affirmative companion to Paper 1's diagnosis. Indian sport's next decade requires more than reform from the Centre. It requires states that choose to do the work. Telangana has chosen. This paper is a considered reading of what that choice has meant — and what it now requires.



Chapter II

What Hyderabad Already Has

An audit of the sporting infrastructure, academies, and athletes the state has cultivated

THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE

Telangana is not building a sporting ecosystem from scratch — it inherits a Hyderabad that already houses two of India’s most consequential private sports academies, an IPL franchise, a national-stature state sports school, and a generation of medal-winning athletes who returned to teach the next.

Before any state can articulate what it intends to become, it must take an honest inventory of what it already is. This chapter assembles that inventory for Telangana. The state’s sporting infrastructure is, on close examination, unusual among Indian states — not because it is exhaustive, but because its private sector institutions are operationally serious, its public sector institutions are aligned with them, and its alumni now form a network that connects Hyderabad to every consequential conversation about Indian sport. The case Paper 2 builds in subsequent chapters rests on this foundation.

The Gopichand Foundation

The Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy was established in 2008, in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, by the former All England Open champion who had mortgaged his own home to fund the construction. Mr. Gopichand, who in 2001 had become only the second Indian after Prakash Padukone to win the All England title, would within a decade become the most consequential coach in the history of Indian badminton — and the academy he founded would become the institutional pipeline through which the sport’s national resurgence flowed.

The roll call is not modest. Ms. Saina Nehwal won India’s first-ever Olympic medal in badminton — a bronze at London 2012 — under Mr. Gopichand’s coaching. Ms. P. V. Sindhu followed with a silver at Rio 2016 and a bronze at Tokyo 2020, becoming the first Indian woman to win two individual Olympic medals. Both trained at the Gachibowli academy. So did Mr. Kidambi Srikanth, who reached world number one in 2018. So did Mr. Parupalli Kashyap, Mr. H. S. Prannoy, Mr. B. Sai Praneeth, Mr. Sameer Verma, and a generation of women’s doubles players led by Ms. Jwala Gutta. The academy was honoured in 2013 with the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar in the category of Establishment and Management of Sports Academies of Excellence — the formal recognition of what the Indian sporting establishment by then understood to be true.

Two facts about the Gopichand Academy matter for this paper’s argument. First, it is a private institution founded by a former athlete who chose to remain in Hyderabad rather than relocate to New Delhi or Mumbai. Second, its commercial sustainability has been underwritten not by central government grants but by a combination of personal commitment, industrialist patronage, and corporate CSR arrangements that the state government has actively facilitated. The Telangana sporting ecosystem’s most decorated institution is, in other

words, a state-friendly private sector exemplar. The Sports Policy 2025 is, in part, an effort to generalise this model.

The Mirza Investment

The Sania Mirza Tennis Academy is the second of the Hyderabad academies whose commercial seriousness has begun to reshape an Indian sport. Ms. Mirza — six-time Grand Slam champion, former doubles world number one, and a daughter of Hyderabad — operates the academy near the city and, in May 2026, launched a High Performance Tennis Programme in partnership with former Portuguese Davis Cup player Marco Seruca. The programme is described, by its principals, as the most ambitious institutional commitment Indian tennis has yet seen, integrating technique, physical conditioning, match strategy, and sports psychology into a single coaching environment. Its target is the next generation of Indian players who will compete on the WTA and ATP circuits.

The significance, for this paper’s argument, is again structural. India produced Ms. Mirza in part because she had access to international-quality coaching from her family. India’s next generation of tennis players will, in part, have access because Ms. Mirza chose to build the institution that supplies it — and chose to build it in Hyderabad. The state government’s role, in both cases, is enabling: land, infrastructure, regulatory facilitation, a permissive environment for private sporting investment. The Mirza Academy is not a state project. It is a private project that the state has chosen to host.

The Sunrisers Question

Sunrisers Hyderabad is the Indian Premier League franchise that represents the city. The team has no stadium of its own — it plays home fixtures at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Uppal, owned by the Hyderabad Cricket Association. Sunrisers is owned by SUN Group. The franchise’s brand value in 2025 stood at approximately USD 56 million, even after a 34% year-on-year decline. The team has won the IPL once (2016), reached the final twice more (2018, 2024), and remains a fixture of India’s annual sporting calendar.

Paper 1 of this series quotes Mr. Boria Majumdar’s observation that the IPL is “an idea, not a building” — that Sunrisers’ commercial worth lies in its broadcast share, sponsorship inventory, and fan equity rather than in physical infrastructure. The observation has particular resonance in Hyderabad. The state’s most commercially successful sporting property is operated by a private franchise, plays in a stadium owned by the state cricket association, generates value through a central pool revenue model managed by BCCI, and contributes economically to the city without consuming the state government’s resources. This is, in microcosm, what the central reform architecture proposes to make possible at scale — and Sunrisers’ existence demonstrates that the model is operationally feasible.

The State Institutions

Public sector sporting infrastructure in Telangana is anchored by the Sports Authority of Telangana State (SATG), the implementing arm of the Government of Telangana’s sports portfolio. SATG operates the Telangana State Sports School at the Hakimpet campus on Hyderabad’s northern periphery — the institution that conducts talent identification, hosts residential athlete training, and works with the Mahatma Jyotiba

Phule Telangana Backward Classes Welfare, Tribal Welfare, Social Welfare, and Minorities Welfare residential education systems to feed the talent pipeline. The Hakimpet campus is also the proposed site for the Young India Physical Education and Sports University (YIPESU), a 200-acre public-private partnership institution that the Sports Policy 2025 designates as the state’s flagship higher-education sports facility.

The state also operates the Telangana Olympic Association as the affiliate of the Indian Olympic Association at state level, oversees the implementation of Khelo India schemes through SATG’s Khelo India Centres of Excellence, and coordinates the National Sports Repository System interface for athlete documentation. These are not glamorous functions, but they are operationally essential — and Telangana’s public sector sporting institutions are, by the standards of most Indian states, comparatively well-organised.

The Athletes

Telangana’s sporting record over the past two decades has produced a roster of athletes whose individual achievements are often discussed without reference to the state that produced them. Mr. Mohammed Siraj, the fast bowler who took 6 for 15 against Sri Lanka in the 2023 ICC Cricket World Cup final qualifier and was inducted as Deputy Superintendent of Police by the Telangana government, is from Hyderabad. Ms. Nikhat Zareen, the World Boxing Championship gold medallist who is also a DSP, is from Telangana. Ms. Deepthi Jeevanji, who in 2024 became the first woman from Telangana to win a Paralympic medal — bronze in T20 400m at Paris — is from Warangal. Olympian shooter Mr. Gagan Narang, whose own shooting infrastructure complements the Gopichand and Mirza academies, is a Hyderabad sporting icon.

Each of these athletes is a recognisable national figure. Few of them are publicly identified, in common discourse, as Telangana athletes. This is itself a measure of the state’s sporting maturity — that its sons and daughters are first identified by their sport, and only secondarily by their geography. The Sports Policy 2025’s commitment to making sport a viable career in the state is, in part, a commitment to making this pattern self-sustaining: that the next generation of Indian athletes will come, increasingly, from Hyderabad, Warangal, Karimnagar, Khammam, and Nizamabad, because the institutional pathway to do so will be available.

Closing Synthesis

Telangana is not, in 2026, a state preparing to become a sporting force. It is a state that has been a sporting force for at least two decades and is now codifying its existing practice into institutional commitment. The Gopichand Academy, the Mirza Academy, Sunrisers Hyderabad, the Sports Authority of Telangana, the Telangana State Sports School, and the network of state-supported athletes together constitute an ecosystem that most other Indian states have not built and would now find difficult to replicate quickly. This is the foundation on which the next chapter argues the state is structurally positioned to lead Indian sport’s reform decade.



Chapter III

Why Telangana Can Lead

The structural factors that distinguish the state from its peers

THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE

Telangana's capacity to lead Indian sport's reform decade rests on four structural factors — a unified portfolio at the IAS level, a culture of public-private partnership, the presence of an academic and policy research base, and the willingness of the political leadership to commit publicly.

Factor 1 — The Combined Portfolio

Sri Jayesh Ranjan, IAS, is Special Chief Secretary with portfolios that include both Metropolitan and Urban Development AND Youth Advancement, Tourism, Culture & Sports Development. This portfolio combination is itself rare in Indian state governance — sports is typically housed in a separate department from urban infrastructure planning. In Telangana, the two sit under one senior officer, allowing infrastructure decisions about stadiums, training centres, and academy land allocation to be made in coordination with broader urban planning. The Sports Policy 2025's commitment to a Sports Hub in Future City could not have been articulated in this form without this portfolio integration.

[Full prose elaboration to follow.]

Factor 2 — The Public-Private Culture

The Hyderabad business community — anchored by industrialist families with multi-generational community engagement — has been a consistent funder of sporting institutions. The Gopichand Academy's founding industrial backing, Sunrisers Hyderabad's SUN Group ownership, the Mirza Academy's private investment model, and the MPM Group's underwriting of Symposium itself are all expressions of a culture in which private capital is regularly deployed for institutional sporting purposes. The state government has cultivated this culture rather than competed with it.

[Detailed case studies to follow.]

Factor 3 — The Research Base

Hyderabad is home to the Indian School of Business (ISB), whose Bharti Institute of Public Policy (BIPP) is led by Prof. Ashwini Chhatre — himself a Symposium Trustee. The Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad and the International Institute of Information Technology contribute applied research capability. The Sports Policy 2025 explicitly contemplates partnerships with such institutions for sports science, performance analytics, and policy evaluation. No other Indian state outside Karnataka and Maharashtra has the equivalent academic infrastructure to draw on.

[To be expanded.]

Factor 4 — The Political Commitment

Hon'ble Chief Minister Sri A. Revanth Reddy has made sports a public priority in a way that few Chief Ministers have. The August 2025 unveiling of the Sports Policy, the sixteen-fold budget increase from baseline, the Sports Hub announcement, the Olympic and Commonwealth Games hosting ambition, and the constitution of the Telangana Sports Development Fund Board with Bindra, Gopichand, Kapil Dev, Bhaichung Bhutia, and Sanjeev Goenka as members are all signals that political leadership is willing to commit reputation to sporting outcomes.

[To be developed.]

Closing Synthesis

No single factor is unique to Telangana. The combination is. The next chapter examines what the state has done with these factors in the Sports Policy 2025.



Chapter IV

The Telangana Sports Policy 2025

Five pillars, a ₹465 crore commitment, and a Board of Governors that signals seriousness

THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE

The Telangana Sports Policy 2025 is the substantive state-level response to the central reform architecture — and its design is operationally credible enough to merit careful examination by other states.

The Five Pillars

The Sports Policy 2025 names five pillars: Governance and Organisation; Sports Ecosystem; Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD); Infrastructure; and Skills Development and Career Pathways. Each pillar carries specific commitments — institutional, financial, infrastructural — and a Resource and Monitoring Plan that the policy document specifies in its concluding chapter.

[Full pillar-by-pillar elaboration to follow.]

Pillar 1 — Governance and Organisation

The Sports Authority of Telangana State (SATG) is the operational anchor. The Telangana Sports Development Fund (TSDF) provides the financing mechanism. A 14-member Board of Governors — including Mr. Abhinav Bindra, Mr. Pullela Gopichand, Shri Kapil Dev, Mr. Bhaichung Bhutia, and Shri Sanjeev Goenka — provides external oversight. The state has effectively chosen to model federation governance on the central Sports Governance Act 2025's principles before the Act's full implementation rules are notified.

[To be elaborated.]

Pillar 2 — Sports Ecosystem

Multi-sport approach across disciplines with existing Telangana strength: badminton, shooting, tennis, cricket, hockey, athletics, boxing, kabaddi. Specialised support for women athletes, para-athletes, and rural sportspersons. Mini stadiums in all Assembly constituencies. Specialised sports schools in each Lok Sabha constituency.

[To be developed with verified data.]

Pillar 3 — Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

Internationally benchmarked LTAD framework. Talent identification beginning at the school age cohort. Integration with KIRTI (Khelo India Rising Talent Identification 3.0). Pathway from foundational to intermediate to elite training tiers.

[To be expanded.]

Pillar 4 — Infrastructure

Young India Physical Education and Sports University (YIPESU) — 200-acre campus at Hakimpet, public-private partnership, 12 specialised academies, modelled on South Korea's Sports University and the University of Queensland (Australia). Telangana Sports Hub at Future City with Sports Science Centre and Sports Medicine Centre. International cricket stadium discussions with BCCI for Begumpet site.

[To be elaborated.]

Pillar 5 — Skills Development and Career Pathways

Coaches development. Sports administrators training. Sports media and broadcasting skills. Sports science and physiotherapy capability. Sports tourism and event management. Career pathways for athletes beyond competitive years.

[To be developed.]

The Financial Commitment

₹465 crore in the FY 2025-26 state budget (₹100 crore increase YoY). Hon'ble Chief Minister has stated this represents a sixteen-fold increase over historical baseline. The Telangana Sports Development Fund provides the institutional vehicle for additional public-private capital.

[To be quantified with multi-year projections.]

Closing Synthesis

The Sports Policy 2025 is unusually well-specified by Indian state standards. The question is whether implementation will match the design — the question this paper takes up in Chapter VI.



Chapter V

The Central Architecture as State Opportunity

How the Khelo Bharat Niti and the National Sports Governance Act 2025 create devolution space for states

THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE

The 2025 central reform architecture is not designed to centralise Indian sport — it is designed to create the legal and policy space within which states like Telangana can operate with seriousness; reading the central architecture as state opportunity is the analytical frame this paper proposes.

The Niti's State-Level Logic

The Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 explicitly contemplates the state as the implementing layer. Sport is constitutionally a State subject under Entry 33, List II of the Seventh Schedule. The Niti's whole-of-government approach assumes state-level execution — it serves as a model policy for States and Union Territories to draft their own policies. Telangana's Sports Policy 2025 is a direct response to this invitation.

[To be elaborated.]

The Act's State-Level Architecture

The National Sports Governance Act 2025 establishes the National Sports Board as the federal regulator, but explicitly contemplates state-level affiliate units of every National Sports Federation. The state government's role in oversight of these affiliate units — particularly in election supervision, financial accountability, and athlete welfare — is now statutory. Telangana's Sports Authority is positioned to perform exactly this role.

[To be developed.]

The TOPS and Khelo India State Interface

The Target Olympic Podium Scheme and the Khelo India Mission both operate through state-level partnerships. SATG's Khelo India Centres of Excellence, the residential sports school network, and the talent identification pipeline are all expressions of this interface. The state that operationalises this interface well becomes the state that produces the next generation of Indian athletes.

[To be elaborated.]

The Constitutional Opening

The Centre has signalled, through the Niti and the Act, that it will not attempt to run Indian sport from New Delhi. The Constitutional framework places sport with the states. The states that respond — Telangana foremost among them — will, by 2036, be the institutional centres of Indian sport.

Closing Synthesis

The central architecture is opportunity, not constraint. The next chapter proposes the operating model through which Telangana and other states can take that opportunity seriously.



Chapter VI

The Telangana Operating Model

Symposium's recommendations to the Government of Telangana — and through it, to every state government willing to lead

THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE

Telangana has the policy, the budget, the institutions, and the political commitment; what it now requires is an operating model that translates these inputs into measurable sporting outcomes — and Symposium proposes that model here.

Recommendation 1 — A Telangana Sports Cabinet

Establish a standing inter-departmental forum chaired by the Chief Secretary, with the Secretaries of Sports, Education, Urban Development, Health, Women and Child Welfare, and Finance as members. Quarterly meetings. Mandate: cross-departmental coordination on sports infrastructure, school PE workforce, athlete welfare, women's participation, and budget alignment. This forum operationalises the unique portfolio combination that Telangana already possesses.

Recommendation 2 — The Federation Accountability Scorecard at State Scale

Adopt Paper 1's Federation Accountability Scorecard (16 indicators × 4 pillars) and apply it to all 25+ state-level sports associations registered under SATG. Publish annual scorecards. Tie state grant disbursement to scorecard performance. Telangana becomes the first state in India to operationalise the central principle at state scale.

Recommendation 3 — Four Priority Disciplines

Designate badminton (existing strength via Gopichand), shooting (existing strength via Narang), tennis (existing strength via Mirza), and athletics (rising strength via Deepthi Jeevanji and others) as Telangana's Tier-1 priority disciplines. Concentrate state resources accordingly. Pursue a 'state of choice' positioning for these four disciplines such that talented athletes from other states are attracted to Telangana for high-performance training.

Recommendation 4 — The Hyderabad Sports Sciences Institute

Build, within the YIPESU campus at Hakimpet, a dedicated Sports Sciences Institute that integrates sports medicine, biomechanics, performance analytics, sports nutrition, and sports psychology. Affiliate with ISB BIPP, IIT-H, and IIIT-H for applied research. Partner with the Abhinav Bindra Sports Medicine and Research Institute (Bhubaneswar) as a national-network institution.

Recommendation 5 — Two PE Teachers in Every Government School

Mandate, within five years, the recruitment and posting of at least two physical education teachers in every government school in Telangana. Coordinate with the Department of School Education. This is the workforce expansion that Paper 1 identifies as the missing layer in the central architecture. Telangana can demonstrate at state scale what the central Department of School Education has not yet operationalised.

Recommendation 6 — Decentralised Leagues in Tier-2 and Tier-3 Cities

Use Warangal, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Khammam, and other tier-2/3 cities as host venues for state-level professional leagues in non-cricket disciplines. The infrastructure exists in fragments; the institutional commitment is what is missing. Decentralised league venues are the model for both economic development outside Hyderabad and broad-based talent identification.

Recommendation 7 — Annual Telangana Sports Report

Publish, annually, a comprehensive Telangana Sports Report documenting scorecard performance for every state association, budget utilisation, athlete pipeline statistics, infrastructure progress, and outcome metrics. The publication itself becomes the accountability mechanism. The Sports Authority of Telangana State could become India's first state sports body to publish at this level of transparency.

Recommendation 8 — Symposium as Annual Convening Partner

Establish, with Symposium, an annual public dialogue on the state of Telangana sport — combining government, federation leadership, athletes, academic researchers, corporate funders, and civil society. The 30 April 2026 evening becomes the template. Annual convenings sustain the institutional discipline; this paper becomes the inaugural document of that convening tradition.

Closing Synthesis

The operating model is not a wishlist. Every recommendation traces to either the Sports Policy 2025, the central reform architecture, the panel discussion, or to verifiable practice elsewhere. Implementation is the question; design is settled.



*Chapter VII***A Five-Year Roadmap, 2026 to 2031***Sequenced implementation of the operating model, with measurable annual milestones***THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE***The Telangana operating model must be implemented in sequence; the next five years define whether the model becomes a national template or an unrealised aspiration.***Year 1 (2026-27) — Foundation**

Sports Cabinet constituted with Chief Secretary as chair. SATG publishes the inaugural Telangana Federation Accountability Scorecard for all 25+ state associations. Four priority disciplines formally designated. YIPESU foundation stone laid. First Annual Telangana Sports Report published. Annual Symposium-Telangana dialogue conducted.

Year 2 (2027-28) — Infrastructure

Hyderabad Sports Sciences Institute construction begins. Telangana Sports Hub at Future City breaks ground. PE teacher recruitment programme launched — first cohort posted. First decentralised league venue inaugurated in Warangal.

Year 3 (2028-29) — Operationalisation

YIPESU first academic intake. Sports Sciences Institute begins operations. PE teacher cohort reaches 50% of target. Scorecard tied to grant disbursement. State athletes targeted for LA 2028 supported through a TOPS-aligned state programme.

Year 4 (2029-30) — Measurement

First independent evaluation of Sports Policy 2025 outcomes. Scorecard data published with three-year comparative analysis. Telangana hosts a national sporting event (Asian Games / Commonwealth Games / National Games trial).

Year 5 (2030-31) — Consolidation

Sports Policy 2025 succeeded by Sports Policy 2031. PE teacher target met. YIPESU first graduate cohort. State sporting outcomes evaluable against 2026 baseline. Telangana model documented for adoption by other states.

Closing Synthesis

Five years is the window. The Asian Games 2026, the LA Olympics 2028, the Commonwealth Games 2030 (Brisbane), and the potential India 2036 bid frame the international milestones. State delivery on the operating model is what makes Telangana's claim to lead Indian sport's reform decade credible.



Chapter VIII

A Template for Others

*Conclusion***THE ARGUMENT IN ONE SENTENCE**

Telangana has done the work of articulating what a state-led approach to Indian sport's reform decade can look like — and the question now is whether other states will adapt the model, refine it, and contribute to a federated sporting culture that is more than the sum of its central government commitments.

Paper 1 of this series ended with a question: whether the federations of Indian sport, having now been granted a statutory architecture for governance reform, would translate the architecture into operational practice. Paper 2 answers the question from one state's vantage.

Telangana has chosen to commit. The Sports Policy 2025 is a state-level commitment that predates the Symposium evening by eight months and the National Sports Governance Act 2025 by less than three weeks. The ₹465 crore budget is a verifiable financial commitment. The Telangana Sports Development Fund Board of Governors — anchored by Mr. Bindra, Mr. Gopichand, Mr. Kapil Dev, Mr. Bhutia, and Mr. Goenka — is a reputational commitment that the leading minds of Indian sport have endorsed. The Sports Hub at Future City, YIPESU at Hakimpet, the discussions on hosting major international sporting events — all of these are commitments that the state government has made publicly and that the public record can hold accountable.

Symposium's contribution, through this paper, is to propose an operating model that translates these commitments into measurable outcomes — and to invite other states to read this model as a working template. Karnataka has historical sporting depth that could support a similar approach. Maharashtra has commercial scale. Odisha has government will. Punjab and Haryana have athlete pipelines that could anchor priority discipline strategies. Tamil Nadu has institutional sophistication. Kerala has the cultural foundation. Every Indian state has at least one structural factor that Telangana has built into its sporting story. The question for each state government is whether to make the commitment that Telangana has made.

Symposium believes Indian sport's next decade will be defined by the states that choose to lead. The central architecture has done its work. What remains is the operating layer — and the operating layer is, constitutionally and operationally, the state's responsibility.

This paper, and Paper 1 of this series, will be carried by Symposium into the policy rooms where they now need to be read. We trust that the rooms will be willing to engage with what they say, and that the engagement will continue, in serious form, through the decade ahead.

Indian sport's next decade will not be reformed only from New Delhi. It will be reformed in the states that choose to translate the Centre's architecture into operational practice.

— Sri Jayesh Ranjan, IAS · Foreword to Paper 2



Annex

Speaker Bios & Methodology

The Panel — 30 April 2026

Mr. Girish Mallpani — Chairperson & Trustee, Symposium; CMD, MPM Group; ISB alumnus; founder of Symposium's predecessor Altis Knowledge Club. Hyderabad.

Sri Jayesh Ranjan, IAS — Special Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana, with portfolios spanning Metropolitan & Urban Development and Youth Advancement, Tourism, Culture & Sports Development. A 1992-batch IAS officer; recipient of the Royal Order of the Polar Star; honorary doctorate, University of Bolton. Member of the Symposium Board of Trustees.

Mr. Abhinav Bindra — Olympic Gold Medallist (Beijing 2008, 10m air rifle); founder, Abhinav Bindra Foundation; member, IOC Athletes' Commission; co-chair, 2017 Olympic Task Force; member, Telangana Sports Development Fund Board of Governors.

Ms. Mandira Bedi — Sports broadcaster and presenter; fitness advocate.

Mr. Boria Majumdar — Sports historian, Rhodes Scholar; founder, RevSportz; author and commentator on Indian sport.

Col. N. S. Johal — Chief Executive Officer, Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), Sports Authority of India.

Mr. K. K. Maheshwari (Vote of Thanks) — Trustee, Symposium; Managing Director, CIL Securities Limited; President, Telangana State Table Tennis Association; Sr. Vice President, FTCCI.

Methodology

This paper draws on the Symposium 2nd Edition panel discussion (Hyderabad, 30 April 2026). Direct panel statements are attributed inline. Symposium's recommendations are framed as institutional contributions, not endorsed positions of the Government of Telangana or any panelist.

Companion Paper

This is Paper 2 of the Symposium Beyond the Game White Paper Series. Paper 1 — The Federation Question is the diagnostic companion to this paper. Both papers should be read together. Available at symposium.org.in.

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Symposium is a curated community of India's foremost thinkers, leaders, and practitioners, united by an uncommon appetite for ideas, dialogue, and the kinds of relationships that shape what comes next. Founded by Mr. Girish Mallpani, Symposium evolved from the Altis Knowledge Club and is headquartered in Hyderabad. The Symposium White Paper Series carries the institution's curated dialogue into the policy rooms where its conclusions need to be heard. symposium.org.in.



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