

Sports Tourism in Tamil Nadu- Problems and Prospects

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Article Info

Volume 83

Page Number: 7502 - 7511

Publication Issue:

March - April 2020

Abstract

Sports tourism is an intricate phenomenon. It refers to travel, which involves either observing or participating in a sporting event while staying apart from the tourists usual environment. Sports tourism is a fast-evolving part of the tourism industry. It is traveling to a country or state and to participate in a sports event or just to watch the event.

Tamil Nadu being a state which ranks first in attracting both domestic and foreign tourists arrival is well connected with other states and countries. It has also the necessary infrastructure for conducting various types of sports and games. Several national and international sports and games were conducted in Chennai and parts of Tamil Nadu. More over Tamil Nadu has lots of sports buffs who participate in the sports events and enjoy watching sports. The Tamil Nadu sports fans do encourage a variety of sports from track and field events, hockey, football, cricket, kabadi, basket ball, shuttle badminton, volley ball and tennis to name a few. More sports tourists visit Tamil nadu for participating in sports and to watch also as the State has bequeathed with grounds, hotels and other entertainment factors. Of late Kabadi, IPL league ,BPL league , Tennis tournaments, Football , Cricket and Kabadi tournaments were held in Chennai which attracted several sports enthusiasts .

Though the Sports tourism is growing, it has few problems and prospects in Tamil Nadu. The problems are language, fewer sports infrastructure facilities for certain games , less sponsorship facilities, low availability of sports kits and grounds, and a smaller amount of support from State Government and public sectors . The prospects are more tournaments are going to be conducted in the future in Tamil Nadu as there are sports fans, sportsperson, coaches and other necessary facilities. In this research article, the researcher has tried his level best to comprehend the problems in Tamil Nadu in sports tourism and has explored the avenues for prospects and suggestions. The warm hospitality of Tamils, tourist friendly environment, blameless law and order, good administration of the State has enabled the sports organizers to conduct the sports event often .If the Sponsors, State Government, Public sectors and people try to motivate and encourage the various sports and games events, the State will go a long way in being called as Sports Capital of India.

Article History

Article Received: 24 July 2019

Revised: 12 September 2019

Accepted: 15 February 2020

Publication: 07 April 2020

I. INTRODUCTION

Tamil Nadu is the state located in the southern part of Indian peninsula. Tamil Nadu has a great legacy of cultural heritage and historic importance. This state has several notable temples, monuments and an ancient culture vibrant and lively till date. Apart from the cultural, pilgrimage and heritage destinations the state has bequeathed with wild life sanctuaries, dense lush green forests, lovely hill

stations and lengthy coastline. Due to these tourism products visitors frequent it with enthusiasm, from other states and countries for pleasure and leisure, sight seeing, historical monuments and adventure sports attractions.

Tamil Nadu has a distinct style of temple architecture which is known as Dravidian style. This style is adopted in temples in Tamil Nadu. There are several religious tourist places such as Kanyakumari,

Madurai, Chidambaram, Kancheepuram, Nagore, Palani, Rameswaram, Thiruvannaamalai, Srirangam, Thanjavur and Velankanni. Few of the cultural and heritage attractions are located at Chennai, Vellore, Gingee, Dindigul, Madurai, Mahabalipuram, Poompuhar, Trichy and Gangai Konda Cholapuram

Coonoor, Sathanur Dam, Chennai, Point Calimere, Coramandel Coast, Pichavaram, Kodaikanal and Ooty are places where the tourists can admire the beauty of the nature. Wild life sanctuaries such as Mudumalai wildlife sanctuary National, Mukkurthi National Park, Point Calimere Wild life sanctuary, Kalakkadu Wild life sanctuary, Mundanthurai Wild life sanctuary, Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wild life sanctuary, Guindy National Park, Vallanadu Black Buck Sanctuary, Vedanthangal and Karikili bird sanctuaries, Arignar Anna Zoological park, Madras Crocodile park are other places of interest for the tourists.

Tamil Nadu has mystical amalgam of rituals and festivals. These festivals are celebrated in an unique way with pomp and splendor. To name a few are Summer festivals, Music festival, Tea and Tourism festival, Saral festival, Sculpture fair, Pilgrim festival, Dance festival and Pongal festival.

Tourism and Sports Linkage

In the former decades, many people have considered sports and tourism are two separate activity, and their amalgamation of two subjects has been uncommon. But of late the link between two disciplines have been fortified due to multivarious factors and trends. It has a got a great say in developing economic renewal. The more you exercise it benefits the health of the person. There is also proliferation of media in international sports and sporting programs. As we know sport tourism refers to travel away from native place to play a game or be the audience, or to visit a sports attraction. It also has few health benefits as well as other doles. Big sporting events have also converted to significant tourist attractions such as Common

wealth games, Olympic games, World cup Foot ball and Cricket. More over sports and games may provide the host city to develop the infrastructure and increased tourism as in the case of FIFA 2014, Rio de Janeiro world cup Football in Brazil. Tourism may assist as an incubator for promoting new sports such as beach volley ball and aqua sports games which have progressed as big events these days.

II. OBJECTIVES

The research study is formulated with the following objectives.

1. To study the concept of sports tourism and the linkage between them.
2. To understand the Tamil Nadu sports tourism viability.
3. To investigate the prospects in Tamil Nadu Sports tourism and how it can be enhanced to attract more sports personnel in the future.
4. To find out the problem in Tamil Nadu Sports tourism sector and suggest few remedies.
5. To suggest the few measures to improve and promote Tamil Nadu Sports tourism.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is to bring out the Tamil Nadu sports tourism potentials, in Tamil Nadu and to know the details about the problems and prospects in this sector. The study also makes a probe into, how the various sports and games events attracts the sports fans in India and abroad, and its role in promoting the domestic and international sports tourism. For simplifying this research study the entire sports tourism potential, games and athletic events conducted and its growth and other relevant statistics and information were brought under its purview.

Research Problem: The research problem in the present research study is that sports tourism is a major topic in foreign tourism researches, but less

importance is given to this topic in Tamil Nadu. The two variables sports and tourism has to be studied in depth to come out with new findings and implications involved in it. In several foreign countries, sports and games are vigorously included in the school and college syllabus and more importance is given for the students to practice sports and games in the educational institutions. More sports equipment, ground facilities are available, and new researches pertaining to the sports oriented subjects are dealt in a professional manner. In Tamil Nadu sports and games are played in schools and college, but not much prominence is not given due to various factors. Several schools and colleges do not have ground facilities and quality sports and games kit are not provided for the students. For the common citizen also, ground for playing is not available very much. More support and encouragement may be given to enhance the playing spirit of sports and games by both private and public sectors.

Research gap

Though there are few studies about the sport tourism in India and abroad, but there are very fewer research work done in Tamil Nadu sport tourism sector. Even if few research papers have dealt with Sports and Adventure tourism in Tamil Nadu, but it has not been extensively and exclusively dealt with problems and prospects in the sports tourism title. Hence, the researcher has tried his level to explore this research gap and come out with few suggestions and findings which will help people related in this sports field.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data was related with research study was collected from the field visit in Tamil Nadu. Data was collected by interviews and by observation method. To assess the various features of Tamil Nadu sports tourism, interviews and opinions of various sports personnel coaches, sports officers were taken in this regard. The secondary data was collected from the books, journals, magazines,

internet, newspapers, publications and reports of tourism department of Tamil Nadu.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism being fundamentally an accommodating venture requires coordination of various activities at a scrupulous tourism spot which is provided by the tourist organizations at different levels. Sports tourism is a diverse identity and has to be dealt in different method. The review of existing literature on the chosen topic are as follows:

The authors Tom Hinch and James Higham, in their book, Sport Tourism Development, (2011) focus on the sports tourism markets, conceptualizing demand for sports tourism, event sport tourism markets, nostalgia sport tourism, spatial analysis, marketing place for sport tourism, seasonality, evolutionary trends in sport tourism. This book points out the important changes in the way the sport tourism are managed by multiple stake holders.

The Sport and Adventure Tourism book, (2003) author Simon Hudson, provides detailed information about sports event tourism, forces and trends shaping sport tourism, planning developing and marketing sport tourism, evolution of market and golf tourism. In terms of popular sports participation and sports practice, however, they are inextricably linked.

Very few information pertaining to the topic is available in books and websites.

Tamil Nadu Sports Scenario

The different climate and a huge number of tourist pales make Tamil Nadu an ideal hub for sports tourism. Tourists can enjoy such adventures sports on different spots here like the mountains or the beach. Adventure lovers can opt for any or all of the sport activities including, rock climbing, rappelling, jungle trekking, mountaineering expeditions.

Sports tourism includes hallmark events such as field Hockey world cup at Dhyan Chand National

stadium, New Delhi on 2010, Common Wealth Games at New Delhi on 2010, Cricket World Cup 2011, ISL Football matches were actively promoted as a tourist attraction. During the buildup to ISL Matches, it was estimated that the event had attracted many of foreign visitors to India .Different sports and games are practiced in Tamil Nadu. Following are the few water adventure sports in Tamil Nadu.

Scuba diving

Gifted with clear water, the beaches of Tamil Nadu prove to be one of the weightier spots for scuba diving. The most famous waterfront for Scuba diving in Tamil Nadu is the waterfront in Rameshwaram. The beaches provide all the vital equipments that are required for this activity. There is moreover an zestful medical team on the waterfront that makes indulgence in this worriedness extremely safe.

Surfing

Surfing is one of the most venturesome water sports. Most of the beaches in Tamil Nadu have sunny facility of surf boards and they do have emergency care facilities for the surfers. Water surfing is practiced in Muttukkadu.

Air adventure sports practiced in Tamil nadu

Hang gliding (Chennai), ballooning, or para gliding, are practiced in Tamil Nadu.

Golf courses in Tamil Nadu are situated in Chennai, Salem, Kodaikanal, Udahgamandalam, Coonoor and Coimbatore. Angling is practiced in Avalanchi and Emerald river, Peermund, Chambar, Kallkundi Streams, . Snooker is played in the Nilgiris at the Ooty Club.People indulge in these sports with lot of enthusiasm.

Tamilnadu sports can be split up into two segments. Traditional sports and Modern sports.

Traditional sports are kabadi, seval sandai(Cock fight), Jallikattu(bull taming), Rekla(bullock cart

racing) , Sathurangam(Chess), Malyutham, Gusthi,Kho-kho, Uriyadi and Kilithattu. Modern sports are Cricket, Hockey, Tennis, Motor racing, athletics, soccer, swimming, squash, table tennis, carom, archery, boxing, weightlifting, martial arts, snooker, golf bowling, basketball, adventure sports, horse racing, volley ball and shuttle badminton etc.

Horse racing

This is a popular summer sport practiced in April, May and June. In Ooty the thoroughbred horses are made to race for the tourists. The 2.4 kilo metres race course stands at the altitude of 2,268 metres above sea level, and it is adjacent to the Ooty railway station. Due to horse racing, hundreds of persons were provided jobs.

Tennis: is one of the major global sports, with over 75 million participants world wide.Many more follow Grand slams, Davis Cup and Fed cup events. In Tamil Nadu ATP(Association of Tennis Professionals) tour fixture, Chennai open Tennis tournaments has been conducted in Chennai from the year 1997 to 2018 . In this tennis tournament lot of top 7seeded players form different parts of the globe used to grace and it made Chennai as one of the great tennis venue. But for the sporting aficionados in Chennai despair descended in the form of shifting the Chennai Open to Pune in 2018. The Chennai city is regarded as the Meccas of Indian tennis, home to two of the India's greatest tennis families the Krishnans and Amirthrajs. Indian tennis legends Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi , nick named as Indian Express won the doubles titles for three years. Boris Becker came and graced the court which was huge draw at those times.

Chennai has several sports clubs with different games and has several teams which are very popular . The following is the brief list of teams which represent different games.

Chennai city based sports teams which participated in different leagues and their venue.

Club	Sport	League	Home Stadium	Span
Chennai Cheetahs	Field hockey	World Series Hockey	Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium	2011-2012
Chennai City F.C.	Football	I-league	Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium	2016-
Chennai Smashers	Badminton	Premier Badminton League	N/A	2015-
Chennai Spikers	Volleyball	Indian Volley League	Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium	2011-2012
Chennai Superstars	Cricket	Indian Cricket League	M.A. Chidambaram Stadium	2007-2009
Chennai Super	Cricket	Indian Premier	M.A. Chidambaram	2008-2015,20

Kings		League	Stadium	18-
Chennai Veerans	Field hockey	Premier Hockey League	Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium	2005-2008
Chennaiyin FC	Football	Indian Super League	Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium	2013-
V Chennai Warriors	Tennis	Champions Tennis League	SDAT Tennis Stadium	2015
Tamil Thalaivas	Kabaddi	Pro Kabaddi	Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium	2017-

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sport_in_Chennai

Tamil Nadu sport icons: Cricket Ravichandran Aswin, Murali Vijay, Srikanth, Chess Viswanathan Anand, Hockey Bhaskaran, Karun Chandok Formula one racing , Ramesh Krishan, Vijay and Anand Amirtaraj Tennis, Dipka Pallikal Squash, Kuttraliswaran Swimming, Sharath Kamal Table tennis and Carrom Mariam Iruthayaraj are to name a few.

Tamil traditional sports and its versatility:

The traditional sports of Tamil Nadu is very alluring and interesting to play with enthusiasm. More

visitors have liked its unique traditional tamil games and its versatility. Kabbadi, Seval Sandai (Cock fighting) Jalikkattu (bull taming sport) Rekla race(bullock cart racing) Sathurangam((Chess) Malyutham (full contact grappling) Kai kuthu sandai(Boxing) Killithattu(7 stones game) and Kho-kho to name a few. Other games such as Uriyadi(smashing a earthen pot with long stick usually with cloth wrapped around eyes to prevent participants from seeing the pot) indoor games like Pallanguzhi involving beads, Kallankai, Bamabaram involving spinning of top, Dhayakattai a modified dice game, Aadu pulu attam Nungu vandi and seechangal.

Tamil Nadu Sport Tourism Problems Faced

Tamil Nadu sports tourism will be benefited to a large extent if the sports persons and its governing members collaborate and coordinate among themselves. The sports tourism will increase only when the stake holders , media, sports person, State and Central Government organizers and other try to have unity among themselves. The Tamil Nadu sport tourism will be improved only if the following problems faced in sports are address well.

Stakeholders in sports vested interests : Sports has several stakeholders, and every partner is very as imperative as the balance of the other personnel. The stakeholders can be classified as: Sports lovers ,Sports persons, Media, Coachers, Trainers and support staff, Central and State Governments, Sports Governing Bodies, Sporting goods and apparel manufacturers, Sponsoring partners. Almost all the stake holders have a financial as well as emotional interest in performance of their sports teams and development of sports in the country. But at times the vested interests, ego clashes and other bad factors weaken the sports structure and sport personnel.

Sports Association and its eagerness to generate finance: Most sports association in games and track events have a great urge to accumulate more

finance. In this intention, they at times forget the true sportsmen and sportswomen and try to give chances for lesser talented persons who are rich and wealthy. Nepotism plays a spoiled sport and it spoils the sport spirit

Lack of finishing school in sports: When interviewing the sport physios and trainers the main thing the lament is to produce top class athletes and professionals in games who can compete in international tournaments , that there is no high tech sports structure set up, and no model for the upcoming sports persons. The Physical education teachers who train in the sports colleges and universities learn the way the games, how to play, rules and regulations and minimum level of playing techniques. What they have to acquire more is about the coaching tactics, game techniques, improving fitness levels, nutrition based studies and sports psychologist to enhance and fine tune the performance level of their wards to highest competition standards. So, it is suggested that there should be high tech sports finishing school with the above criteria for the sports trainers and coaches.

Restricted freedom and disputes among the sport association bodies to conduct tournaments and selection of sports persons, which leads to several problems . The sports association freedom is clipped by the top bureaucrats which affects the function of the members. Ego clashes between the members of the association president, secretary and office bearers often infuses bad blood among the association, and thereby professional behavior is wanting at times.

As per the latest news, the World Archery (WA) has suspended the Archery Association of India (AAI). Earlier, the WA executive board had given a July 31 deadline to both AAI factions to resolve their disputes, including parallel elections. The decision by WA to suspend AAI is because the matter is now in court. The participation of Indian archers in international events under the National flag is jeopardised after AAI's suspension. After the

suspension, the last event in which Indian athletes can participate is the world youth championships in Madrid from August 19 to 25, 2019.

Poor infrastructure for playing games and track events.: The sports person should be provided proper infrastructure to play games. For ex. Our hockey players are playing in the mud grounds. But when they go and play state, National and International games they need to play in turf ground which will pose a few hurdles for them. Same thing applies for track and field sports persons too.

Poor quality playing kits: Most sports persons are not able to buy quality playing equipments and kits due to financial problems. There are certain games like cricket, golf and tennis which involve huge amount of cost for its kits like cricket bat, tennis racket and other accessories. If less quality kits are used the talent level, skill level and confidence level of the person drops.

Poor staying facility, transport and food facility for players: When the sports persons travel to participate in sports, they are provided in second class train travel, poor accommodation in dormitory and less nutritious food are usually provided which makes the players to perform in a below par level.

Government and private sectors role in developing sports and providing jobs are appalling: Government sports quota job provision is dwindling due to several reasons. Even in private sectors sports persons are not given jobs, and are not allowed to practice their games.

Less media coverage of sports and track events: When popular sports like Cricket's Ranji Trophy (State level) is telecasted in TV, other games National level competitions are not telecasted. Sports and track events get very less coverage. Even in other print media the sports person from non popular sports do not get adequate publicity. This spoils their confidence and they are not able to market themselves in the future.

Many trainers and coaches lack the way and scientific method to groom and develop sports persons to participate in high competition events like commonwealth and Olympics games.

More marketing techniques should be employed by the coaches, trainers for the events conducted and generate more anticipation, excitement among the sports persons and public.

Tamil nadu sports tourism prospects:

Tamil Nadu sport tourism has several prospects. The State has good education facilities, and good literacy rate. Also more people watch sports as well as indulge in sports and track events which shows that people are more interested in sports tourism field.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu finds young sports talents by conducting 15 days camps and groom them to participate in games. They provide infrastructure and other benefits for the sports persons.

Major tournaments conducted: Badminton, Cricket IPL, Pro Kabadi, Pro Football, chess tournaments, ATF Tennis tournaments were conducted in Chennai and other places.

Film fraternity, corporates are involving in developing sports and they also conduct few tournaments which develops the brand image of sports and state.

Media coverage is being carried out for the big tournaments, which indirectly helps the sports tourism.

Top cricket stars and film star now own the kabadi, shuttle badminton and cricket teams which directly and indirectly motivates several sports aficionados to undertake trips to encourage and motivate their favourite stars teams.

Popular film stars of south Indian film industry join and conduct cricket tournaments among themselves in various parts of Tamil Nadu which is supported

well sports fans.

Various sports in schools , colleges are getting started. Sporadic opening of shuttle courts, TT courts and cricket coaching academies are happening and it is supported by people.

More people undertake sports as a main occupation which is a good sign .

More Sport nutritionists, physiotherapists, trainers and getting inside the sports segment which augments well in the sports developing scenario.

More marathon running events are conducted in the Chennai city and other places. The support to participate and sponsor is growing well.

More information about sport journalism, sport technology, sport lighting, digital marketing of tournaments are spread through internet and other sources.

New breed of sports lovers developing

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Following are the few findings of the research study.

- People are interested in involving their children in sports which are very common and popular among people. Less income oriented and less popular sports are neglected by the citizens of Tamil Nadu.
- Media coverage plays an major role in attracting variety of sports. Popular games like Cricket, Foot ball are given much coverage and other games are not given due coverage due to less viewership and sponsorship by viewers.
- There is a big division of sports and tourism among rural and urban citizens of Tamil Nadu. Rural people involve in games like Kabadi, Kho Kho, football and volley ball whereas urban people have an inclination to play Cricket, Tennis and Basket ball.
- Sports kits and machinery to practice various sports also play an major role in sports tourism .
- Sports is an additional talent or skill for the

students and it can never be first hand profession for most of the sports parents. Even if they excel in the sports in State level too they have to study in the other times. Incase they do not do well in education most parents try to stop sports practice and send their wards to schools for more study.

- Schools do give certain privilege for sports students when they win medals. For daily practice not much support is given by the private schools. In Government schools few
- Technology to play sports and games in higher level is a big bottleneck for several sports aspirants. The cost of applying technology to develop their performance in sports is an expensive factor and not all can travel to USA and other places to fine tune their skills in swimming, tennis, basket ball and other track events. In one way the technology is not available in our country and in another aspect the cost is also very expensive for those who undertake a trip to abroad to develop their performance in sports.
- Sports personnel who undertake trips to attend sports and games meet do not take any special steps to visit the nearby tourist places to relax even after the meet is over. The organizers also have not evinced any interest in this regard. They may at least disseminate information to the participants about the tourism spots in the vicinity.

VII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Few implications involved in the research, are listed below.

- Most people who undertake sports tourism in Tamil Nadu fall in the age group for 25 to 45 only. This is the major percentage as the old age people still believe that they are not needed take interest in sports.
- The sports persons who undertake tourism in India and other countries only visit the venue , where the sports events are conducted and never try to go around other tourist destinations, due to financial and time constraints.
- The Indian sports persons success in

Olympics, Common wealth and other global sports tournaments had changed the mindset of people and they do think that their children can take up the game and be successful in it.

- Most of the sports parents opine that, personalised coaches, trainers for games like swimming, athletics and other track events are very much essential for their children to win the tournaments and events.
- Participation in sports by young sportsmen are constantly pressurized to win medals in all the events they participate. Incase they do not win either they stop practicing the sport and game or change the coach trainer in the subsequent months.
- Most coaches, trainers, sports personnel do not have refined sports information about bio mechanics, nutritive diets, sports physio, video analysis to enhance performances in their sports and games events.
- There is very minimum role played by big companies to improve sports through the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Tamil Nadu towards sports and games .
- Most sports parents feel that winning medals is the ultimate aim and participating with good team spirit, learning life skills like winning and losing are part and parcel of life attitude is missing in most of them.
- More sports based tamil channels, newspapers, sports schools can be operated to develop the sports.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Sports tourism in Tamil Nadu has been growing fast in encompassing manner with visible socio economic indication. Its transformation process is very interesting with new sports consumer groups of distinct travel motivations, life style patterns and travel requirements evolving in each façade. Sports tourism in Tamil Nadu offers both opportunities, developments and also difficulties and challenges.

The concept of sports and tourism and its framework are quiet different from any other type

of tourism in Tamil Nadu. But both the sectors are neglected area in the schools and colleges as well in the industry level. Due to this very little information and knowledge are available. The public sectors as well as the government level also , very less credible information and documentations are available to have a better understanding.

On the contrary certain good aspects are more and more youngsters are willing to take sports as an main occupation and passion, which is a positive spot light. Common people rich and poor, young and old indulge in sports activities and do travel to be a part of sport tourism. One section of people undertake tours to adjacent cities and abroad for sports and game related activities.

The future of sports tourism in Tamil Nadu is booming because of its diverse topography and climatic condition. In Tamil Nadu the sports tourist lovers can enjoy sports in land, water and air too. Sports science and sports related technology, machinery, equipments are rapidly developing in Tamil Nadu. Moreover more parents of sports children, assume that winning is what matters if you indulge in sports rather than participation.

If sports and games are developed only, sports tourism will be promoted. So its better to promote sports in all parts of Tamil Nadu and all type of sports. Traditional sports like Kittipul, Marble game, Silambam, new games like Taekwondo, Judo, Fencing, Table Tennis , Shuttle cock badminton, popular games like Cricket, Hockey, Football, Volley ball and Basket ball in both rural and urban Tamil Nadu which will do a world of benefits in the future for the State. More over it is needed to educate everyone that the ultimate aim of sports and games is not winning, but participating in it with sports spirit which will make several people to develop sports tourism.

If the sport stake holders, Government, Public sector, educational institutions and Non-Governmental organizations, Corporates,

Companies and public take more interest in involving sports and games and encourage and motivate the sports and sportsmen Tamil Nadu can create quality sports persons who can win medals in top tournaments, but also it will enhance the sports tourism sector. Through this the Tamil Nadu tourism segment will benefit a lot and the young generation in future will be a healthy and prosperous one.

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