

Badminton Chief looks to make sport outdoor friendly

By [Madhav Agarwal](#) | Express News Service | Published: 02nd January 2017

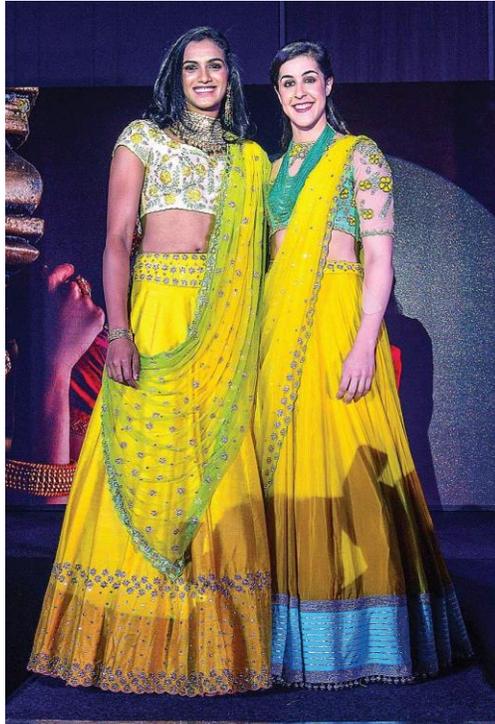


HYDERABAD: Over the past few years, Badminton in India has reached great heights, and has been a sport where the country has been on par with the best in the world. In a glory-starved Nation, where success does not come easy, Badminton has come a long way, and probably reigns supreme by a mile in terms of popularity, after cricket.

The Badminton Association of India, headed by Dr. Akhilesh Das Gupta, and Badminton World Federation are working together to take the game to unprecedented heights. A new development is 'Outdoor Shuttle', helping make the sport more friendly to open spaces.

"This project is still in research-mode. But this kind off shuttle will be useful to those who play Badminton in open fields and courts. This shuttle will be scientifically designed so that it's not disturbed by wind," Dr. Das Gupta revealed to Express during the commencement of the Premier Badminton League here on Sunday.

An area of concern that the President wants to address with utmost strictness is age fudging. He is aware the sport has not remained untouched from this malpractice, but plans to put a curb on it as soon as possible. "Age fudging" is a serious offence. In the past, we've suspended players for this. But till now, there's no concrete way to deal with such a problem. Bone checking is not really recommended for players below the age of 15. So we're trying to find out ways to stop it," DR. Das Gupta added.



(PV Sindhu & Carolina Marin
share the ramp during the opening ceremony
of PBL Season 2)

In addition, far-flung areas in the country are being reached out in a bid to popularise the sport, with world-class academies, international coaches, and of course, talented players part of the package.

“We want to spread Badminton all over the country. We’re currently targeting Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and some cities like Delhi and Mumbai. At these places, we’re working with Sports Authority of India to come up with Academies. All plans have been chalked out, and infrastructure will be ready this year. Even some private players are setting up huge Academies, like the Noida Development Authority, who have full support from BAI. Talks with the Arunachal government are in progress as well, for setting up an academy,” Dr. Das Gupta noted.

The PBL, in its second season, also falls under this plan. “This league is a huge boost for local talent. Our players get to rub shoulders with the best in the world. And with huge prize money involved, there’s financial security for players as well. So, the PBL has done a lot to popularise the sport. I can say that Badminton has now become a full-time career.”

Apart from that, BAI realises that Coaches are the lifeline of such Academies, and aims to improve standards of coaching, as well as produce new Coaches. For that, they have already launched the 'Coach the Coaches' programme, one that is producing some good results.

"Coaches are of utmost importance. We launched this programme in every state, and have witnessed good results thus far. In this scheme, we offer certificate courses to coaches. So the coach not only has practical knowledge, but theoretical knowledge as well," Dr. Das Gupta concluded.
