

Second edition of Indian Badminton League to be held in January 2016

After achieving grand success in its inaugural edition, the BAI has taken the onus on themselves to conduct the Tournament.



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After much dilly-dally, the second edition of the Indian Badminton League (IBL) is all set to roll out with the Badminton Association of India (BAI) promising a heavy dose of glitz and glamour in the much-awaited tournament scheduled to be held in January next year.

“BAI has the experience of holding much bigger events such as Thomas and Uber Cup, Super Series event and World Championship and so we decided to do it on our own from this year to ensure the longevity of the tournament. We will be back with a bang next year,” BAI President Dr Akhilesh Das Gupta told reporters.

The second edition were initially announced from September-October 2014 and then postponed to January-February 2015, before finally scheduling it in first fortnight of January.

“We have a one month window from December 17 to January 18th every year and we want to make it a permanent event without any gap or delay and for that it is important that BAI hosts the event on its own,” Dr Das Gupta explained.

The league, which could not be conducted in last two years, will retain its six franchises format represented by the Indian cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Lucknow with talks on to replace Pune with Chennai.

“We want to go with one state one Team this time. Last time we had Mumbai and Pune from Maharashtra which is not advisable. So we are looking at Chennai as a venue this year,” Dr Das Gupta said.

“The franchises will also have to give a Bank Guarantee to ensure the interest of the players,” he added.

Just like the first edition, players will be auctioned with fresh contracts being issued by BAI. However, IBL 2 will also have a few new franchises with many Bollywood celebrities set to join the IBL bandwagon.

The Indian body has also roped in Event management company, Evolution Sports to help them conduct the tournament.

“We will have a Bollywood celebrity as brand ambassador of IBL, besides most franchises are trying to involve Bollywood celebrities in their Team by giving them stakes in the franchise,” Dr Das Gupta said.

The second edition will witness enormous cash windfall with a hike in the overall prize money of the event and also substantial increase in the purse available for each franchise to bag their choicest players during the auction which is likely to be held in November.

“We want to ensure that more money comes to Indian Badminton. So it will be more lucrative and much more interesting this year. We have asked the Technical Committee to come up with the exact policy, rules and regulation for the event.”

The Rio Olympics will be held next year and all the top players are busy to seal their respective berths for the prestigious event and there are some concerns if players will be interested to participate in the event before the Games. **However, Das Gupta said that all top players of the world have shown lot of interest to play in IBL 2.**

“Most of the Indian players have confirmed their participation and also there is a lot of interest among the foreign players. We are also in talk with players individually and Asian federations like China,” he said.
