

TransStadia to invest Rs 525 crore over three years

START UPS

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Here's a sports company with some uniqueness :TransStadia

With a vision to make a difference to the sporting fabric of India, Udit Sheth founded India's leading urban sports infrastructure company – TransStadia. It started construction of its 1.4 miosqft project in central Ahmedabad's Maninagar and launched its first PPP world-class arena in Ahmedabad in Oct 2016 within 31 months of construction. He has been recently awarded the Chanakya Award for Achievement & Entrepreneurship in Sports Infrastructure by Public Relation

Council of India in March 2017. Sheth is also the Joint Managing Director of BSE & NSE listed Setco Automotive, India's leading auto-component Company and the largest manufacturer of commercial vehicle clutches in India.

A science graduate from Purdue University, Indiana, USA, Sheth from Ahmedabad wears a motley cap. He enjoys the outdoors, is an avid reader of history and an advanced scuba diver, fitness expert and a sports person.

His entrepreneurial journey is as intriguing as his personality. Read on!

Established in 2008, SE TransStadia Pvt. Ltd. (TransStadia), an integral part of the Setco group was built on the firm belief that India could emerge amongst the global frontrunners in the sports arena. We aimed at creating a financially viable infrastructure revolution, and brought in leading architects, project consultants and stadium construction firms to make TransStadia an enviable multi-purpose stadium with integrated training and sporting infrastructure. Its uniqueness lies in the usage of globally renowned technologies which have been utilized to construct it.

Note-worthy amongst many is the patented 'T-Box Technology' that allows modular and retractable seating systems and the patented 'StadiArena' that enables conversion of a section of the stadium into an indoor arena. The latter can be utilized for at least 12 indoor sports, exhibitions, social functions, conventions and corporate events. Iconic by global standards, these state-of-the-art facilities serve a strong legacy plan while benefiting sports and the community at large.

The germination

The idea was germinated by Paul Fletcher MBE of UK. He spent 40 years in the sports business, as a player and a stadiologist. We learned from him that globally, stadia are utilized at an average two per cent per annum. When we look at India's urban density – we see stadia that are unplanned and white elephants that don't contribute to the communities in which they exist. Using his thought process and technology guidance including the patented Tbox&StadiArena (developed by Paul) we can shoot this utilization to approx 70 per cent per annum. The idea was to contribute to the sports sector with something that could bring fans to the stadium and build facilities designed around fans, players and broadcasters.

To ensure that when the stadium is not used for sport, multiple revenue sources are created through modular and convertible technologies, we have tied up with StadiArena UK and have additionally introduced the T - Box technology as well.

Public Private Partnership

Once the idea was germinated in 2008, I presented it to the then Chief Minister of Gujarat, our Hon' Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The presentation was the dream of 'sports for all' on a Hub-and-Spoke model for sport and sports infrastructure development – which would be flagged off with the development of state-of-the-art multi-purpose, multi-sport and social involvement infrastructure in the city of Ahmedabad. The project, which covers all aspects of sports, entertainment, hospitality and talent development, was deeply scrutinized by the government from every aspect and then awarded under a pioneering Public Private Partnership (PPP) to the company.

Promoting sports industry of the country

TransStadia realizes that sport is the sunrise industry of India and has adapted the DNA of sport in its own philosophy. Our philosophy, therefore, is to build an organization committed to sports development in India through a strong revenue generation model, which packages products and brings eyeballs to the table and thereby maximizes engagement for all people.

To realize this vision we have invested Rs 525 crore over a three- year period as the project cost. TransStadia is promoted by my family and is funded on a 2:1 debt:equity model with lead bank being Bank of Baroda & others being Bank of India & Union Bank. We have our corporate office in Mumbai, registered office in Ahmedabad & other branches in Goa, Bengaluru & New Delhi. TransStadia Technologies in Kalol, Gujarat, and work with a team of 148 people. Our model has been recognized with the Chanakya Award for Achievement & Entrepreneurship in Sports Infrastructure by Public Relation Council of India in March 2017.

A panacea for sport, entertainment and leisure

We want to focus on sports, but also provide other facilities to ensure high utilization. On non-match days it could host a number of events across industries like Wellness, Leisure, Hospitality, Education, Retail, and more. It's a world class MICE facility.

Udit Sheth

We also cater to smaller events as small as for 50 people. We also have a 40,000 sq. ft. pillar-less, air-conditioned, indoor arena, stylish banquet halls, and a football stadium with Turf protector, which are equipped to handle exhibitions, conferences, conventions, weddings, etc. So at any given time we can host up to six events simultaneously. In the past seven months of operation, TransStadia was home to the Kabaddi World Cup 2016. We also hosted the first ever Mission XI Million Football Festival in association with AIFF & FIFA U17 World Cup that was attended by Hrithik Roshan, Bhaichung Bhutia & Praful Patel. We are gearing up for the Pro-Kabaddi League 2017 and many other major events lined up.

Vision

On the success of the Ahmedabad project the company is already in talks with various state governments to fast-track new or re-development projects to revitalize urban centers with this world-class urban sports infrastructure model. While we do that, we also recommend changes in sports policies and work with government on talent search and development to highlight the potential in a state.

The objective is that with a strong and precise sports development model backed by a strong revenue model, sports can become more than CSR, it can be an industry that is a strong GDP contributor that not only throws up great talent, but can also provide secure jobs for the future.

Would you be interested in investing into a 'sports infrastructure' company? Please share your views.