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I assure you that Gujarat will have a football team in the near future: Udit Sheth

Written by: [Punit Tripathi](#)

Turning heads and leading the worldly revolution of Indian alternate sports, Transstadia proves why nothing is impossible.

‘It’s not just a stadium, it’s an experience.’ Apt words aptly put. [Transstadia](#), a newly opened stadium, it is India’s first true PPP in Sports Infrastructure. Narendra Modi, during his time as the Chief Minister of Gujarat, believed in the presentation that sport can only grow with public and private collaboration. This project envisages that 7 stadia alone are built in Gujarat on a hub and spoke model to catalyse sports development through competition, talent nurturing and infrastructure development.

A project worth Rs. 550 crores, Transstadia uses world-class technology for stand convertibility from Stadi-Arena UK, and seat-retract ability by T-Box, both patented technologies and being the pioneers in India. This ensures that on a small piece of land, the project that accommodates 1.4 mi. sq. ft. of constructed area can be used for sport, entertainment, wellness, hospitality, retail and more. At the press of a button, a part of the outdoor stadium converts into an indoor arena within 6 minutes.

SE TransStadia Introduction Video

We got the opportunity to have a free-wheeling conversation with Transstadia Founder and Managing Director Udit Sheth, who was welcoming and gave us a brilliant insight on various aspects associated with the project. The Government had granted the land for the project during the time Narendra Modi was the chief minister of the state.

Excerpts:

Q. Starting off, don't you think Gujarat being a BJP dominated state and Narendra Modi's home ground, there was relative easiness in getting the project sanctioned and working on the complete PPP model?

A. No. I think the current Government is quite balanced in terms of the development of sports and it really doesn't matter which place you're in. The project was started when Narendra Modi was our CM and he's been closely associated with the project since Day 1. This, certainly, has been a differentiating factor. Talking about states, we approached other state governments as well, but Gujarat acted the fastest. We're open to working on similar projects on a pan-India scale.

Also Read: [TransStadia officially launched by Indian PM Modi](#)

Q. What was your basic idea/motive behind this idea and why did you choose Gujarat, a state not known to be sports loving beyond cricket?

A. The project, when I conceived it, had a few basic pointers. The first one was that it had to generate revenue. The other one was that it had to be multi-faceted, as sports-oriented facilities are often deemed to be minimally used in our country. Thus, a new sense of urban renewal and rehabilitation started off the idea and we worked on it for social benefaction and a wide spectrum of sports as well as other facilities. I had approached about 15 state governments, four of them replied back. The most positive one was from Narendra Modi's Gujarat, and here we are today.

To watch more photographs of Transstadia: [Click Here!](#)

Talking about the Gujarat state Government, the budget has increased about 10 times in the last six years, which speaks highly of the kind of development they've done in the state. The state now ranks 10th in the State rankings, having risen from 28th just a few years ago. We being *Gujaratis*, our idea is to convert white elephants into rocking city centres and we could take this setup and place this anywhere in India, with the right support.

Quick Facts:

- **FIFA Standard Football Stadium** with a seating capacity of 20,000 people
- Patented Technologies to enhance spectator experience:
 - **StadiArena:** air-conditioned 32,000 sq. ft. pillar-less multi-purpose indoor arena
 - **T-box:** modular and retractable seating systems
 - **Turf Protector** - world's only turf protection system manufactured from truly translucent HDPE material, it allows for continuous photosynthesis, which ensures optimal turf health, together with a 30-year UV degradation guarantee

Q. Do you think the world-class technology and facilities will be lapped up by the local people of Gujarat or would you be dependent on audiences beyond the state?

A. Look, this is what sets Transstadia aside. I could have a Navaratri programme at the base, an I-league game involving a Gujarati club against a Kolkata side and a YouTube Live programme, all at the same time. So the audiences depend on the event. Otherwise, the club facilities give you enough perks to join in and develop a healthier future for you and your

family. We're not only just event location; we're a hub for entertainment and several other events. We also have club and hospitality services, which are state-of-art facilities as well.

TransStadia Sports Performance & Rehab - Human Performance Lab

Q. How do you think Transstadia will help the growth of Gujarat's football?

A. This topic can be divided into two parts: Growth of football in Gujarat and Gujarat footballers' growth. For the latter, we're working closely with the SAG and have our own academy which is working towards the same. For the earlier one, an ISL or I-league club can come up, can tie-up with us to host its home games and we're sure there's a lot of space and scope for the growth of football in the state. We're arranging various interactive 5-a-side tournaments to increase participation in the sport and a state-level school competition, which ensures a consistent return of quality footballers.

Q. If a team comes up in Gujarat and makes the Transstadia as the host stadium; do you think you'll be able to fill the 20,000 capacity?

A. I do not have the headache of filling up 60,000 or about a lakh people, and with quality football around, I'm sure we'll fill up the seats pretty quickly. We're about 400+ clean toilets and audiences can watch the game from the edge of the pitch, something which is not found anywhere in India. With the right amenities and good quality on the pitch, I'm sure we'll be getting full stadiums.

Convertible Stadium

I can also assure you that in the next 24 months, there will be an ISL or I-league team from Gujarat.

We're working with the Federation and we want them to host International games here. We also want them to try out the facilities while at a training camp, and we're sure the manager and the officials will like it.

Q. What do you think is a hindrance at the grassroots which is stopping India to become a sporting heavyweight?

A. According to me, there's no hindrance of any sort other than one: India, from the institutional point of view, needs better coaches who're up to date and know how to groom young players with the right education, like in Germany. We need people who want to develop sports as a whole with passion, and not just as CSR activities for better tax planning.

Also Read: [Germany's depth in quality the envy of the football world](#)

Q. With the array of sports you're providing, how do you think the Olympic revolution can get better in India, starting with the Transstadia?

A. We want coaches from all over the country to use our facilities to help the athletes perform better. The bureaucracy needs to perform better as well, and a comprehensive plan needs to ensure that the job is being done on the right track. There needs to be a standard operating model which applies to every Indian state and only need, we'll see the right talent coming up through the ranks and winning the accolades internationally.

T-BOX - Stadium-In-A-Box' technology by TransStadia

Sports need to move out of the ambit of the government and need to come under the private sector because only then, the players will get the right returns and treatments. Governments need to take care of the grassroots and at developing young talent. More competitions/leagues, the better it will be for the players.

Also Read: [The status of other football stadiums in India, getting ready for the FIFA U-17 World Cup](#)

Quick Fact: The project has been built with all green building standards of power saving, smart water and power utilisation, fire safety, rainwater harvesting and more. The project has been built with 7.75 mi. construction man-hours. It has 44 km of electrical cabling and 14 km of Wi-Fi cabling. It has 200000 sq. ft. of landscaped areas. Recently, on Oct 2nd, the project was launched after 31 months of construction, with the first ever Pro-Kabaddi styled Kabaddi World Cup 2016, which India won handsomely.

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