



# Gujarat National Law University

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### **Three-day lecture series on Sports Governance, Mr Dev Kumar Parmar delivered a lecture on ‘Good Governance in Sports: Aftermath of a Global Pandemic.’**

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**Gandhinagar, January 19, 2021:** On day 2 of the three-day lecture series on Sports Governance, Mr Dev Kumar Parmar delivered a lecture on ‘Good Governance in Sports: Aftermath of a Global Pandemic.’

Dev is an internationally experienced sports lawyer and academic, with previous experience as a football intermediary. He is one of the 21 persons worldwide to hold esteemed position of FIFA pro bono counsel and is also legal and Governance Director at British Volleyball Federation. He is also on the Advisory Board of Football Foundation of Africa. Dev is a published writer on sports law and is the current academic director of the Global Executive Masters in International Sports Law at the world-renowned ISDE in Madrid.

Dev discussed the various challenges faced in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and said that the biggest learning from the pandemic is: Be proactive. Citing the example of the Wimbledon tennis tournament organizers, he said, following the SARS outbreak in 2003, they had the foresight to buy pandemic insurance at an annual premium of £1.5 million. This was renewed from year to year without any event until 2020 paying around £25.5 million in premiums over 17 years. When the tournament had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, they received £174 million in the insurance claim. Other reputable sporting events also had to be cancelled but not all had the pandemic insurance!

Citing another example of the Kenya Premier League, Dev said that when all games of the 2019/20 season could not be played due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they could declare the winner based on the performance in the matches played because their statute had a provision to that effect. Contrast this with the British Football Association. In their case, when semi-professional events were cancelled midway, all results in that season had to be expunged as they did not have a stipulation similar to that of Kenya in their statute. This led to many controversies.

Dev said it was for the first time after the Second World War that sporting activities across the globe had stopped in 2020 following the pandemic. We don’t know whether this would happen again after another 100 years or the next year! He advised the sporting authorities to have the foresight and be proactive in their approach.

Subsequently, while deliberating the rise of e-sports during the pandemic, Dev said: “E-Sports is not the future, it is the now” and analyzed how this generates a rise that may not be measurable in actual growth of sports but rather in broadcasting, thereby creating a paradox. A positive aspect due



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to growth in broadcasting has been that more content is then created for consumers. Finally, on his transition into a sports lawyer from a criminal lawyer, he highlighted the importance of perseverance and passion as fundamentals that helped him switch to a career in the field of sports law.

Dr Niyati Pandey, Assistant Professor and Head of the GNLU Centre for Sports and Entertainment Law proposed a vote of thanks.

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