



# KERALA MULTI SPORT BEACH FESTIVAL 2014

**An initiative of Rashtriya Life Saving Society (India) supported by  
the Australian Sports Commission, Government of Australia and  
Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of Kerala**

Organized By:



Organized By:



Supported By :



Australian Government

Supported By :



Government Partners :



# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The Kerala Multi Sport Beach Festival was organized by the Rashtriya Life Saving Society (India) and Surf Lifesaving Australia from 26th Feb to 2nd March 2014. The event was supported primarily by the Australian Sports Commission, Government of Australia with some support received from the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of Kerala.
- The event's success has paved the way for future synergy in development of sports and tourism in the State of Kerala. The event was attended by 475 athletes of which 171 were girls, over a 200 officials and volunteers from different sporting disciplines and organisations from Kerala and parts of India. The event provided different groups an opportunity to showcase their potential and strengths to interested decision makers in the Government, Corporate and Public who now are looking at this event model and trying to scope key areas of association. It is estimated that the event was witnessed by over 25,000 people over the 5 days that it was conducted.
- It is estimated by the World Health Organisation that over 1 million people die due to accidents and injuries every year. Indian people lack the understanding of safety and this behavioral factor is primarily responsible for people placing themselves and their families in danger which result in accidents and injuries. One of the biggest takeaways for the Rashtriya Life Saving Society (India) was that this event created an opportunity to encourage the masses, especially children and youth to participate in lifesaving sports and therefore enroll to undergo training as lifesavers. Pushing such events will in itself create a large force of aware people who can save lives and reduce the human attrition in India.
- This was the first of its kind event where athletes from elite federations and NGO's competed together on the beach. Whilst the children from Naz Foundation and Magic Bus got an opportunity to share skills and techniques with some of the top teams in Beach Soccer and Volleyball, the elite athletes from Kerala also got an opportunity to understand the challenges that many others across the country have in exercising their basic right to play.
- The participation of Surf Life Saving Australia in the success of this event was pivotal. Don Marsh and Stephanie McGuinness who are both volunteers and 'clubbies' in Surf Life Saving Clubs in Australia spent 2 weeks before and during the event to help RLSS (I) in setting up the event. They shared their experience from Australia and made it possible for the organizers to take notice of the subtle nuances that made the event a bigger success. The exchange of cultures that took place as part of the daily routine during the event amongst this group has become an investment for the future. This volunteer exchange program built capacity through training of officials (Officials Conference was conducted by Don Marsh on 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2014).
- The event was inaugurated by Adv. Smt. K Chandrika, Mayor of Trivandrum. In her opening address, she welcomed all present to her city and mentioned the using free spaces on the beach for structured sports as an excellent initiative. 'It is important that our beaches remain free, clean and safe for our citizens,' she mentioned. Speaking at the function, Mr. Stuart Campbell, Deputy Consul General from Australian High Commission's Chennai Office expressed his pride in being able to support such an event. He explained the importance that sport plays in the Australian culture and was happy that RLSS (I) and SLSA were able to recreate that same passion amongst the people at Shanghamukham Beach. Over 5000 people were present during the inaugural evening of the event and were audience to the spectacle of sports under lights. This display of sporting spirit lasted for 5 days and had over 25,000 spectators during the period despite 2 evenings of tropical rainfall which threatened to take the luster away from the event.
- In summary the Kerala, the Kerala Multi Sport Beach Festival 2014 achieved 2 most important things. It was able to sensitise the people of Kerala to the importance of sport and acquiring the skills to save lives and was able to bring to the attention of the key decision makers in high places of the need for such initiatives to be supported as deliver tangible outcomes for the population as a whole.

Right: Girls from Naz Foundation playing Beach Netball at Shanghamukham Beach





# **BACKGROUND**

Sport has unique attributes that enable it to contribute to development processes. Its popularity, its capacity as a communication platform, its role in reducing risks associated to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and its potential to set the foundation for healthy child development together with its ability to connect people make it a tool that can be used to meet a range of development objectives. In relation to health, the specific outcomes include:

- Improved multi-sectoral action to address NCD risk factors; and
- Improved health related behaviours among target groups.

*Physical activity* is one of the most undervalued interventions in improving public health. There is considerable evidence that physical activity in outdoor environments is closely associated with better physical and mental health and reduced mortality. Outdoor exercise can play a major role in combating a range of physical and mental health problems arising from physical inactivity. Well-designed sporting interventions can help tackle physical illnesses, especially obesity, osteoporosis and Type 2 Diabetes. They can also enhance mental well-being by reducing stress and improving self-esteem.

Kerala is one of the most progressive states in the country and acknowledges the contribution of sports to public health. RLSSI's Swim N Survive program has gained recognition from the Government of Kerala. The Kerala state government supports RLSSI to train children in lifesaving skills in the age group of 5 to 14 years in selected schools in selected districts. This festival will boost the current program and will open the doors for building new relationships, attract funding, and increase engagement with the government.

Hence the Kerala multi-sport beach festival was planned to be organized by the Rashtriya Life Saving Society India (RLSSI) in partnership with Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) in Kerala. The event would highlight the role of fringe sports such as lifesaving and their specific contributions in addressing development challenges in India. While the importance of lifesaving sports will be promoted, the festival would also showcase the work of Australian Sports Outreach Program (ASOP) partners in India as best practice in Sport for development. This will heavily promote the role of sport and the high quality work that ASOP has done in developing children and youth through sport. Combining lifesaving sports with other beach sport events is more likely to attract key stakeholders and heighten the event's profile.

The unique festival will support:

1. Building awareness in lifesaving sports
2. Increase participation from children, schools and sports associations
3. Government recognition of the potential value in hosting the event every year
4. Kerala positioning itself as a state driving sport for development and advocating its positive impact to other states
5. Engaging schools to promote participation, especially of girls
6. Schools integrate sports and lifesaving skills into their education curriculum.



Right: Swim N Survive Program by RLSSI and DSYA using Portable Pools

# OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Kerala Multi Sport Beach Festival 2014 were as follows:





# **PARTNERS & ORGANISERS**

**Rashtriya Life Saving Society India (RLSSI)** is a leading organisation that promotes the concept of lifesaving sports and its importance to the community. It has been operating for the last 13 years across India. RLSS (I) was the nodal agency for the organisation of the Kerala multi-sport beach festival. Its key responsibilities were:

1. To undertake all steps necessary to facilitate overall conduct of the event on a turnkey basis.
2. To achieve the objectives as stated in this submission to be in line with the objectives of the ASOP India program.
3. To report to ASOP India Secretariat and Australian Sports Commission on all including financial matters relating to the organisation of the event.
4. To facilitate adequate utilisation and reporting of grant funding received for the conduct of such an event.
5. To promote the roles of ASOP, its partner organisations, other local partners and the Government for all matters relating to the organisation of the event.
6. Any other roles as mutually agreed in the event planning period.

RLSSI undertook the organisation of the event by deputing its team led by Ankit Wagh, General Manager—Strategic Development who had undertaken all liaison with ASOP to deploy the event. He was regularly reporting to CEO, RLSSI and ASOP India Coordinator on developments. The major areas that were taken into consideration were:

1. Registrations of Teams
2. Promotions and Media
3. Travel, Transportation and Refreshments
4. Gear and Equipment
5. Venue Setup and Management
6. Safety and Security
7. Organisation of lifesaving sports and triathlon
8. Finance

**Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA)** was the second organiser of the event. SLSA is Australia's major water safety, drowning prevention and rescue authority. SLSA creates a safe environment on Australia's beaches and coastline through patrols, education and training, public safety campaigns and the promotion of health and fitness.

Most of Surf Life Saving's international work is undertaken in the Asia-Pacific region, not only due to geographical location, but also because of the aquatic environments within the region. Also, as the largest developed country within the Asia Pacific region, a great deal of responsibility to support developing countries lies with Australia.



Above: RLSSI Water Safety overseeing the lifesaving

SLSA has been working towards developing surf lifesaving in India with RLSS (I) since 2003 and under a strategic agreement since 2009. This event with further strengthen the relationship and the successful work which RLSSI-SLSA are doing in India. SLSA is currently seeking volunteers from SLSA clubs and state branches to work in organisation of the event from October to January 2013.

Their prime involvement in the event was to assist with 2 volunteers from Surf Life Saving Australia supported the RLSSI for the organisation of the event. Their names were Don Marsh (63) and Stephanie McGuinness (24). Don, who hails from Hobart, Tasmania is a multiple Australian National Ironman Champion in his Masters age group and he provided deep insight to the team on the organisation of the event, course setup and officials training. Stephanie a young lifesaver from Stanwell Park Beach in New South Wales worked with the volunteers to organise the team registrations, marshalling and event safety. Their involvement in the event left a very positive mark whilst providing their Indian counterparts with an opportunity to increase their experience.

The second biggest contribution from Surf Life Saving Australia came in the way of a donation of 13 Nipper Boards and 101 competition rash vests. Matt Thompson, member of Eleoura Lifesaving Club coordinated with a very positive and eager Club Committee to ensure that used boards from their club did not go waste and could be given away to support the development of a nippers (Junior Lifesavers) movement in India.

DHL Australia who already share a partnership with Surf Life Saving Australia facilitated the process by shipping these to India for free.

But in the best of plans, Murphy's Law must never be forgotten. Rough Seas on the day of the event forced the organizers to cancel the nippers board races. The gift from Australia will be used for future training, other beach and ocean competitions and to develop similar gear in India.

**Sportz4you Pvt Ltd** – This is an end-to-end consulting and events management company for sporting events. Their expected deliverables were as follows:

1. To develop an event management plan and formulate an execution strategy in conjunction with RLSS (I) and ASOP India Coordinator
2. To formulate a PR and Media Management strategy and implement necessary parts of it
3. To develop a 'case' for RLSS (I) such that lifesaving sport receives greater recognition in Kerala
4. To facilitate necessary participation by networking with local stakeholders in Kerala

As a part of their contribution to the event, they organised setup of the venue, media and PR before and during the event and various crowd participation activities around the event. **Matrubhumi** a leading paper in Malayalam was brought in as media partners for the event. Matrubhumi provided coverage via newspapers articles, radio (Club FM) and video (Kappa TV)

**Australian Sports Commission (ASC)** were the principal sponsors of the event. In addition to providing the funding for the event, ASC also provided their network in India to support the organisation and activities of the beach festival. Ms Rekha Dey, ASOP India Coordinator for the ASOP program made the connect between RLSSI and the other ASOP India Partners such as Magic Bus, Naz Foundation and Australian Rules Football India. Organisation of the FICCI Australia – India Partnerships in Sports & Tourism- towards sustainable CSR initiatives was primarily led by Rekha Dey.

**Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of Kerala (DSYA)** provided support for the promotions of the beach festival. Their contribution in allowing RLSSI to access the network of sporting agencies of Kerala through the Trivandrum District Olympic Association was noteworthy. Over 250 athletes from Kerala competed in the event. This was completely coordinated and arranged for by the Trivandrum District Olympic Association



Above: Women's Beach Volleyball Semi Final's under lights

# EVENT SETUP

The event was developed to facilitate the community interest and participation in sport. The event was meant to be completely organised on the beach. Two venues were selected for the event which were Shanghamukham and Kovalam Beach. A standby beach was nominated at Vettucaud Beach and all heats for beach soccer were conducted there.



**Shanghamukham Beach** – Also known as the ‘city beach’ is located outside Thiruvananthapuram city. It is frequently used by people of Thiruvananthapuram and fisher folk who reside in surrounding villages. The beach has a steep gradient which results in it not having many waves beyond 25m from the shore. Keeping in mind the demonstrative nature of the Kerala multi-sport beach festival, this beach would mean participants with lesser skills can compete successfully.



**Kovalam Beach** – is one of the most famous beaches in India. The Beach has been the bedrock of the surfing culture in south India and is visited by many tourists all round the year. The beach has a shallow gradient and is famous for its waves which attract many surfers from domestic and international shores. For the Kerala multi-sport beach festival, this beach will allow participants to showcase their best abilities. RLSS (I) Kerala Office is located 2kms from this beach.

The event venue consisted of 1 beach soccer arena, 1 arena for lifesaving sports beach events (beach flags square and 90 mtrs beach running track, 1 beach volleyball arena and 1 sand sculpture arena which was converted into a beach netball arena. The netball was originally planned to be conducted in the Indoor Recreation Centre adjoining the beach but was then changed to the beach to increase visibility. Some events were held under lights to promote the family to come out and view the sports.

Grandstands were constructed along the pavement of the beach to allow for viewers to sit, enjoy the game and cheer for their local team. Food items were allowed on the grandstands to facilitate a fun filled atmosphere.

The netball events were planned to finish on 29 Feb 2014. After this the court was converted into a football experience centre by HotFut. HotFut is a commercial arena’s company based in Pune. They created a very interesting concept which increased the activities for the public.

Activity area was created outside the playing fields to increase footfalls. We created a Seafood Festival, Paintball Arena, Remote Car Racing, Swimwear Merchandise and a Maruti Suzuki Test Drive Centre.

Cleanliness of the beach was maintained by installing portable toilets and dustbins. Orderly parking was done by the security attendants and volunteers of the event.

The above factors were put in place to demonstrate to all stakeholders a methodology of sustainable local sports event management at beaches. This has the potential to be replicated across the country.

Right: Visual rendering of the Multi Sports Beach Festival Venue







# PROMOTIONS AND MEDIA

- Matrubhumi were the Media partners for the event. They are the second largest publication in the State of Kerala and have a reader base of over 1 million copies every day. They provided coverage via print, radio and video mediums. Club FM their official radio channel covered an exclusive interview of Rear Admiral P D Sharma, Norm Farmer (GM Strategic Development, SLSA), Don Marsh, Stephanie McGuiness and Ankit Wagh at their studio in Trivandrum.
- Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) deputed Stephanie Marsh, India Correspondent to cover the event. The event was broadcasted across Australia on Friday night on 14th March 2014.
- RLSSI developed a special website for the Beach Festival [www.keralabeachfestival.com](http://www.keralabeachfestival.com) which registered over 10,000 hits before and after the event. RLSSI provided the event coverage via an exclusive Facebook Page.
- Australian High Commission, New Delhi and Australian Consul General's Office in Chennai gave the event publicity via their networks and social media
- Partnership with Kesari (Kerala Working Journalist's Union) provided the event coverage through their network. Over 15 newspapers including 11 major Vernacular daily's such as media majors Malayala Manorama and Matrubhumi gave the event large coverage.
- The organizers extensively used hoardings and banners for the event. 6 major hoarding sites were arranged for the event in addition to 300 banners of 3x2 size being placed across the city of Trivandrum. This was done over 2 weeks before the launch of the event so as to get maximum publicity.

# PROMOTING VOLUNTEERING

- The biggest contribution to the event was done by SLSA volunteers, Don Marsh and Stephanie McGuiness. They assisted in various facets of the event and were the key people responsible for its success. They assisted with developing the event equipment from scratch so that it can be preserved for the future as an asset of RLSS I and maintained in good order.
- Don Marsh in a report to RLSSI stated, 'India is well placed to lead the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier of ILS nations and has a well developed association that is on the verge a major leap forward and events such as the Kerala Multisport Beach Festival can help to build capacity in all areas.'
- In addition to the above over 50 officials who are all volunteers, 50 volunteers from RLSSI and 40 volunteers from the Trivandrum District Olympic Association assisted with the organisation of the program. They were the people behind the scenes making sure all arrangement for the athletes and delegates were in place.
- The National Cadet Corps of Kerala deputed 100 cadets from the Army and Air Force Wing to ensure security during the beach festival. They also competed in some of the athletic events of lifesaving sport.
- Cotton Hill College and Local community members, mostly women assisted with the Beach Cleanup on a daily basis.
- 13 Swim N Survive coaches working with the RLSSI in Portable Pool Centers across Kerala were deputed to oversee the equipment and gear and maintenance of the event venue.



Right: Stephanie McGuiness and a volunteer official from RLSSI Mumbai share a light moment

# **PARTICIPATION**

An overview of the participation during the event was as below:

- A total of 475 athletes participated in the event
- 36% of the total athletes that participated were girls
- **A total of 77 events were conducted and 70 matches were played whilst 567 heats were organized during the event.** A major credit of this arrangement goes to the staff and volunteers who were organizing the event.
- Over 200 members of the public participated in the competitions organized on the fringe of the beach festival. These activities were created by RLSSI and HotFut Foundation

## **LIFE SAVING SPORTS: (27<sup>th</sup> Feb to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014)**

Life Saving Sports was organized by officials & volunteers of RLSS (I) & 2 volunteers of SLISA. Don Marsh & Stephnie McGuinness from SLISA.

### ***Participation for Life saving sport:***

State teams – North team, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhrapradesh, Karnataka

***Total number of participants*** – 210

***Total number of officials*** – 15

***No of events*** - 35 events

***Name of events*** took place in those 3 days -Beach Flag, 1 Km run, Swim Race, Board race, Rescue Tube Race, 90 m beach sprint, Beach relay

***Age groups*** participated in the event – U 10, U 12, U 14, U 16, Open (Male & Female)

### ***Final result:***

Overall championship – Tamilnadu with points of 565

Runner championship – Maharashtra with points of 280



Above: Surf Swim for Open Men's Age Group

## **NET BALL: (26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2014)**

Net ball was organized by NAZ Foundation with local support of Trivandrum Olympic Association. A training camp was organized for Kerala participants before the festival by NAZ foundation and 2 teams were short listed to participate with other teams during events.

***Participation in Net Ball Games-*** Magic bus, Samparc, Naz Foundation Delhi, Naz Foundation Mumbai, Kerala A, Naz Foundation India, Kerala B.

***Number of teams*** – 7

***No of participants-*** 65



**No of officials-** 19 (men and women)

**Final result:**

Over all championship: Samparc, Pune

Runner Up: NAZ foundation Delhi



Above: Naz Foundation Girls competing for the first time on the beach

**BEACH SOCCER: (26<sup>th</sup> Feb & 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2014)**

Beach soccer was organized by Trivandrum Olympic Association. Maximum Participation was by local teams. National level teams with players having represented India, participated in the event to make it more competitive and encourage local athletes.

**Participation for Beach Soccer (women):**

State teams: Magic bus, Ayyankali School, Vettukad Women's, United Soccer, Vellayani Girls, Valiyathura Women' club.

**Number of teams – 6**

**No of participants: 42**

**No of officials: 11**

**Final Result: Beach Soccer (women)**

Overall championships - Ayyankali School

Runner up championship - United Soccer

**Participation for Beach Soccer (Men):**

State teams: Kovalam FC, St. Antony Valiyathura, RBI, TLS Vallakadavu, St. Mary's Vettukad, St. Thomas Veli, Magic Bus A, St. Mary's Kuzhivilakam, Black Arrows, Jai Christ, St. George A, Theeram Sanghumukham, St. Peeter's Kanna thura, Magic Bus B, Costal Club Valiyathura.

**Number of teams participated – 15**

**No of participants: 160**

**No of officials: 11**

**Final Result: Beach Soccer (Men)**

Overall championships - St. Mary's Kuzhivilakam  
Runner up championship - St. Thomas Veli



Above: Local Girls playing during the Women's Finals

**BEACH VOLLEYBALL: (27<sup>th</sup> Feb to 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2014)**

Beach volleyball was organized by Trivandrum Olympic Association. National level and international level athletes participated in the event. Beach Volleyball was one of the attractions for spectators visiting festival.

***Participants for Beach Volleyball(women):***

South Zone, St. Joseph, 1, Assumption Changansseri, Wyanadu, TVM, Magic Bus, St Joseph2, Wayanad.

***No of teams participated - 8***

***No. of participants: 24***

***No of officials: 17***

***Final result:***

Overall championships - Assumption Changansseri

Runner up championship - St Joseph2

***Participants for Beach volleyball (men):***

KSEB A, Magic Bus1, Wayanad, Customs Kochi, South Zone, Magic Bus 2, KSEB B, St. Staphans.

***Number of teams – 7***

***No of participants: 29***

***No of officials: 17***

***Final results:***

Overall championships - Wayanad, Customs Kochi

Runner up championship - South Zone

**TRIATHLON: (2<sup>nd</sup> March 2014)**



Above: A. Sathya Narayanan coming in victorious

Triathlon was mainly organized by Trivandrum Olympic Association with the help of RLSS (I) for water activities. Even being a very tough event we had athletes coming down from all parts of country to participate in this event. This sprint triathlon covered 750 m of swim, 20 km of cycling and 5 km of running at Shanghumukham Beach.

To follow emergency procedure 2 ambulance were at the venue in which one was following athletes on route, one patrol car was on track all the time. 2 IRB's were on the water route for safety in water.

**No of participant - 23**

**No of officials - 15**

**Final result:**

Overall Champion - A. Sathya Narayanan from Tamilnadu

Runner up champion – Vishal Singh from West Bengal