E-SPORTS

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E-sports, no one ever thought about it until the pandemic strikes and let alone the idea of adding it to multi-sport tournaments, most prominently, the Olympics. But again, as we have said during this pandemic, more time than we can count “The pandemic demands dynamic changes to the ways of life”. Up until now, there was a perfectly observable existent red line between the traditional sports and “video games or e-sports” but the pandemic has moved on to blur that line putting world game makers and even the International Olympic Committee, as to what should the future of these e-sports be, whether as a part of the Olympics or just one of the Olympics-supported sports because one thing is for sure, the e-sports can be considered a very vital, useful and key part of THE future of sports during and after the pandemic keeping in mind social distancing regulations.

The inclusion of e-sports into multi-sport tournaments may provide a way for the tournament organizing committees with a source of revenue and further help them to recover from economic losses to some extent but the idea of playing only traditional sports in these tournaments interferes with and hinders the introduction of the e-sports or rather the “modern day sport”. Although the normal sports like Cricket and Football have resumed, e-sports can prove to be a brilliant incorporation into multi-sport tournament. But however, it looks like the President of the International Olympic Committee itself is not a supporter of these e-sports or “games” when he stated that these "so-called killer games" which promote violence or discrimination cannot be accepted into the Games.

The definition of sports itself is capricious, sometimes it suits the encouragement of e-sports and sometimes not, and the primary thing being, the views regarding the same are diverse and contrasting. While the traditional definition of sports implies it to be a kind of physical activity which was the primary motive behind the birth of the Olympics, sports in practical concept, also measures mental acuity and skill. Some also argue about the upholding of the spirit and value of sports and are thus trying to negate the concept of the introduction of e- sports into the mix but again in a new tech-savvy world, won’t changing the long established customs and traditions of sports and reverting to the new norms and change be necessary and important component of the future?

Another thing limiting e-sports from joining the ranks of the sports at multi-nation tournaments is the societal stereotype that “video-gaming” is a bad example for children to be inspired from or to emulate, with the problem being the most existent, dare I say, in India itself where conservative ideals are followed, respected and dignified. To give testimony to this, a fact is that China has defined gaming as an “addictive” and sets up treatment centers to deal with gaming disorders. Last but not the least, since e-sports are a technology boon to the new world, its esoteric to some extent and is mostly understood by a small number of people who have specialized interest in it and not the whole wide population.

In conclusion, only question that is put forward and must be answered at the earliest is should the theoretical definitions of Sports be changed so as to befit the inclusion of E- sports in multi-nation tournaments so as to promote a diverse and an even more conducive sports environment, especially in this kind of situation where the traditional sports are finding it difficult to be held normally?