

urban and rural areas to participate actively in sports, physical education and youth activities for achieving good health, high degree of fitness, increased performance in academics, accelerated individual productivity and overall development of their personality.

Both priority and non-priority sports discipline task have been identified to encourage and assist youth from non-popularize areas. Even traditional games are also being given due recognition. While sports-related activities are considered important aspects of overall youth development, yet the department is also organizing special events especially for the youth for becoming a responsible citizen and pillar of society. Towards this goal, youth festivals, an awareness programme on culture, HIV AIDS, environment, social malaise, career guidance, leadership training etc. are being conducted. The department is adopting a holistic approach to develop both physical and intellectual capabilities of the youth. These aspects have helped in increasing youth participation in sports related activities in the state. Every year different programmes are being organized at National/State/District level in different sports discipline. Some of them are as follows:

- ❖ Interschool tournament in Table Tennis, Basketball, Volley Ball, Badminton, Archery etc. is district level.
- ❖ Interschool Athletics.
- ❖ Interschool football tournament for boys and girls of different age groups.
- ❖ Seminar/Clinic/Workshop on different sport discipline.

Indoor/outdoor stadium and Playgrounds as Community Gathering Spaces

A playground with a unique and innovative design is a destination, attracting families and visitors from all over. Themes and imaginative concepts create a one of a kind experience that is a focal point for the community and an inspiring place to play those kids will want to visit again and again. Whether we start with a standard play solution and add themed elements or work with our designers to create a unique, fully customized playground, designing a destination playground that stands out is easier than we think. State Sports Council of Meghalaya (SSCM) pushed the limits of conventional playground design to create an iconic, destination playground for their rapidly growing community. Their mission was to change the way the community experiences their local playground and create a space that served a diverse group of all ages and abilities. The result is truly one of a kind playground that unites futuristic design with the natural topography of the environment. Since implementation of the scheme, the Indoor/outdoor stadium and Playgrounds has been extremely popular with the residents of Meghalaya across the 11 districts, young and old, as well as visitors who are coming from across the district/ city by the busload.

Community playgrounds can also provide an economic impact with increased foot traffic on the way to and from their location. This could translate into more advertising opportunities and more customers for local businesses. There are also job opportunities for city workers and an increase in property value from revitalized areas. Well-designed playgrounds support the health and development of the whole child and the whole community. For a better tomorrow, we play today.

Indoor/outdoor stadium and Playgrounds Serve the Entire Community

Building Indoor/outdoor stadium and playground that serves the entire community are seem overwhelming but not to worry. SSCM created a step-by-step guide that breaks down the process to make it easy and fun. Every community is different, and SSCM helps to design a Indoor/outdoor stadium and that is unique to their goals and needs. **Top 10 Benefits of Indoor/outdoor stadium and Community Playgrounds are as follows:**

1. Playgrounds are fun for children and families
2. Children gain self-confidence and increased self-esteem when they master an activity that was previously challenging
3. Free activity for families
4. Growth of kids' creativity and imagination
5. Increased physical activity helps fight childhood obesity
6. Opportunity for parents, grandparents or caregivers to engage with children through play
7. Reinforce and build social skills when kids play with other children and make new friends
8. Multisensory experiences help to build a child's brain more quickly
9. Brings people together and creates a sense of belonging
10. Outside activity helps to boost mood, reduce stress and increase happiness

Indoor/outdoor stadium and Community Playgrounds also build Important Skills

- ❖ **Cognitive** – When kids interact and explore on community playgrounds, they get the opportunity to problem-solve, think critically and plan strategically.
- ❖ **Physical** – Climbing, jumping and running leads to increased cardiovascular health and increased upper- and lower-body strength. Municipal playgrounds also help improve balance, agility and hand/eye coordination.
- ❖ **Social** – Community playgrounds offer opportunities for kids to collaborate and engage with each other to overcome challenge.
- ❖ **Sensory** – Using more than one sense – sight, hearing, touch – helps build a child's developing brain more quickly.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY BENEFITS:

Families that play together, stay together. Indoor/outdoor stadium & Community Playgrounds and recreation programs are a means to provide families opportunities to spend important quality time together to build strong family bonds. Indoor/outdoor stadium & Community Playgrounds are a tangible reflection of the quality of life in a community. They provide identity for citizens and are a source of community pride. Community Playgrounds and recreation services are often cited in surveys as one of the most important factors in determining the livability of a community.

The Indoor/outdoor stadium & Community Playgrounds contributes to Meghalaya's vital identity. Well-maintained, accessible Community Playgrounds and recreation facilities are key elements of its strong, safe, family-friendly community. Community Playgrounds and recreation opportunities encourage citizens to be engaged in their communities – as volunteers, stewards, advocates and students. Community recreation reduces alienation, loneliness, and anti-social behavior. Community Playgrounds and recreation programs provide places for healthy activities that are accessible by persons of all ages and abilities. Community Playgrounds have a value to communities that transcend the amount of dollars invested or the revenues gained from fees. The DSA strives to build a sense of public pride and cohesion amongst all people as significantly impact the quality of life in the community.

Sports and Youth Development

Sports can be a powerful tool to promote child and youth development. By providing opportunities for young people to develop transferable life skills - characteristics such as leadership, perseverance, social and moral character, self-esteem, commitment to teamwork, problem-solving, and organizational ability - sport help participants realize their potential as productive employees and citizens. Research proves that physical education and sport play an important role in school life increasing school enrolment, retention and access to education and fostering academic achievement. Sport also offers an important avenue for creating youth employment opportunities. Sports are vital to the holistic development of young people, fostering their physical, social and emotional health. The benefits of sport reach beyond the impact on physical well-being and the value of the educational benefits of sport should not be under-estimated. Physical education and sport also build health activity habits that encourage life-long participation in physical activity. This extends the impact of physical education beyond the schoolyard and highlights the potential impact of physical education on public health. The sporting events also aim to promote and develop other aspects of education such as school attendance and leadership. Sports do not inherently provide positive educational outcomes.

Community benefit is a term used frequently in a Meghalaya government context to justify the construction of sports facilities that require initial and ongoing financial support from the community. The purpose of this evaluation study is to investigate the community benefit derived from the development of a new sports facility, in this case the State Sports Council of Meghalaya, and examine community (user) perceptions to verify claims that the venue delivers a range of community benefits. Interviews were undertaken with both facility users and key stakeholders at the venue, and the data were qualitatively analysed to identify specific incidents and coded into concepts to identify predominate themes or patterns: social/psychic impacts; community visibility and image impacts; developmental impacts and political impacts. The findings of this study indicate that, from a user perspective, DSC provides an extensive range of noneconomic benefits such as increased accessibility, exposure, participation and success. The majority of facility users stated that the development of DSC has had a positive effect on their sport, sporting community and sporting experience. It is evident that a considerable amount of public money is spent on developing major sports facilities despite the fact that these funds could be spent on a myriad of other high priority and equally worthwhile city projects. Governments deem the development and subsidisation of sports facilities as justified because the benefits they provide the community appear to outweigh any financial costs, even though the evidence indicates that there is no economic benefit derived from the development of major sports stadia and arenas. Consequently, the noneconomic benefits provided by these projects must be significant to warrant this level of spending on sports facilities. The non-economic impacts are best categorised as:

1. Social/psychic impacts – which generally refer to the enjoyment provided by sports and sports facilities to citizens in a community;
2. Community visibility and image impacts – which capture the concept that a city or locality may experience benefits from being associated with a major sports facility or team;
3. Political impacts – which refer to the political costs and benefits that flow from a sports facility; and
4. Developmental impacts – which refer to physical redevelopment of the area immediately surrounding and in the district encompassing a new sports facility.

4.17 Success Stories

Under the **National Youth Festival (2009, Amritsar – Punjab)** the youths were drawn from all the seven districts of the State and mixed together in groups named after the rivers of the State; Umiam, Umtrew, Ganol, Simsang etc. There were around 600 participants including the group leaders, youth leaders and Departmental Officials. The programmes contents ranges from Aerobics, to fun games; discourses by learned Resource persons who were from different professions on HIV/AIDS awareness. Natural Disasters and the need to be in preparedness, Career Counseling, Leadership Training,