



CHATTOGRAM EXCELLING ACADEMICALLY

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In regards to tournaments, he adds, "All cricket academies are under Chattogram Jela Krira Sangstha (CJKS). Thus, competitions between academies depend on CJKS as well and they are usually held on special days such as Victory Day or Independence Day. Inter-school cricket tournaments also take place once a year."

Academies that train young cricket and football players usually resort to using public fields like Outer Stadium, Parade Field, etc. as they don't have their own fields for training. Academies, at times, also have agreements with different institutions which allow the academies to use their fields for training.

Basketball is another sport which has seen a growing interest across the city. Fazal Rabban Sweet, a basketball trainer at Asian University for Women, noticed a great increase in participation in basketball over the years. He says, "Basketball is mainly played in schools. In the past, it was limited to just one or two schools but later, other schools started providing facilities and started hosting competitions. Former basketball players have also turned to coaching and are

teaching basketball to young players. All these factors, combined with increased participation, have really helped the basketball community grow in Chattogram."

There is also great interest in table tennis amongst the Chattogram youth. CJKS holds inter-school tournaments and league matches in singles and doubles format where students from various schools participate. In terms of opportunities available to practise the sport, Karim says, "Two notable places to practise table tennis are Nabin Mela in Rahmatganj and Friends Club near Ashkar Dighi where people can go and play after paying a fee. Besides, some schools also provide table tennis facilities for their students."

Along with schools and sports organisations, it's also important that private businesses invest in sports at the youth level. This was observed in Chattogram through a rise in the number of turfs and play zones all around the city, such as ChattoTurf and Sicho Arena, which provide facilities and spaces to play sports such as football, basketball, and cricket.

Ishmam Chowdhury, Director of Sicho Arena, talks about how the growing demand to play sports helped the turf businesses to grow. He says, "We opened Sicho Arena to facilitate the demand for a place to play as there were not enough fields in the city. The response we received exceeded our expectations. I am glad to say that there are now many turfs across the city that provide more opportunities for young people to play various types of sports."

It is very refreshing to see the sports scene in Chattogram heading towards a positive direction where steps are being taken so that young prospects can achieve their dreams and more young people can participate in sports. It is important that we keep this up for sports to grow in Chattogram.

Tamjidul Hoque is an UK LLB graduate.