



**FOOTBALL SHOULD BE FUN, BUT ...**

*During these last couple of years football has been battered from all quarters. Notwithstanding all this football has still managed to attract people from all walks of life to watch, enjoy and discuss it. We should capitalize on the massive strength that the game enjoys socially.*

*Considering the negative impression that unfortunately is being created, football has been weathering the storm reasonably well. But all safeguards and preventive actions need to be strengthened. Spreading rumours or allegations which are unsubstantiated, is not the solution, when our responsibility is to defend the game against any adverse attacks from inside and outside of football.*

*All this is not conducive to the fun factor of the game and every care should be taken in portraying the positive image of football to our children. The general impression is that the majority of football matches are manipulated, which is very far from the truth. A very small percentage of matches are deemed to have been manipulated for betting or other purposes.*

*We should all unite in demonstrating the most positive, attractive and welcoming profile of football. Fun in playing and watching football should be the message that reaches the public and all stakeholders are responsible for this to happen. Continuously associating football with money is not helping the situation. We hear about the price tagging of very young players, who immediately get the impression that football is all about money. Their concentration on the game is, in most cases, negatively affected*

*Just have a look at footballers playing the game for fun in the park, streets, five-a-side pitches or during training and you can witness the happy and relaxed expression on their faces. Then look at a competitive match at whatever level and the players' facial expression changes to a concentrated one devoid of a truly happy image, resulting from pressures to adhere to strict and rigid tactical and technical instructions by demanding coaches and club officials.*

*This does not mean that players should not concentrate on the game, and that they should not try their utmost in organizing themselves to win. But this is just an example of how the fun factor changes completely. The fun factor is only associated with winning the match and not with actually having the opportunity, satisfaction and enjoyment in playing football... This is perhaps a very tall order.*

*We should be very careful in keeping the **fun** factor of football, which is becoming ever so more difficult to maintain and promote. ft*