

Extra Innings in the Sun

Indo-German Solar Energy Partnership (IGSP)
Innovative Solar Areas



Commissioned by: Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)



Project partners: Madhya Pradesh Cricket
Association



Project timeline: January 2023 - December 2023



Budget: EUR 5.5 million



Locations: Indore, Madhya Pradesh

SDGs addressed:



A solitary eagle circles the iconic Holkar Stadium, flying low over the cricket ground, skimming the close to 400 shining solar panels that sit on its roof. Since September 2023, the Holkar Stadium in Indore, Madhya Pradesh has boasted a 200 kWp solar PV system that generates an impressive average of 3,500 KWh per month, which is used to power the stadium.

“In 2015, the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium became the first cricket stadium in the world to be powered by solar energy, a joint initiative of the Government of Karnataka, the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and the GIZ. “So when GIZ offered its technical advisory services to help us go solar, we were confident that the organisation that had helped the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium claim this honour would be an ideal partner for us too,” says Mr. Rohit Pandit, Chief Administrative Office, Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association (MPCA).

In February 2023, the MPCA initiated preliminary research on government policies, stadium feasibility, limitations and structure and arrived at a target 200 kWp. With GIZ’s technical expertise, an estimated 280 tonnes of carbon dioxide would be prevented from entering the atmosphere, and about 70-75% of the stadium’s energy usage would be covered by solar energy. Any surplus power generated would be fed right back into the grid.



By September 2023, the Holkar stadium was ready to go solar. On 24 September, as the world prepared for a nail-biting One Day International match between two cricket greats – India and Australia– it was the Holkar Stadium’s solar PV system that stole the limelight. Unveiled by former Indian cricket team captain K L Rahul, representatives of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the MPCA, the solar PV system grabbed the attention of the entire cricket-watching and sports community around the world, sparking discussions on the importance of sustainability in sports.

“This solar PV project demonstrates the tangible financial and environmental benefits of integrating renewable energy into public infrastructure and underscores our dedication to advancing innovative solar areas in India,” said Henrik Personn, head of GIZ India’s solar projects on the occasion.



The Holkar Stadium was the ideal venue for a solar overhaul, having already invested in a rain-water harvesting system in 2006. Since rooftop solar panels need to be dust-free, and so regularly washed to allow them to operate at full-capacity, rainwater harvesting is one way to ensure that even the maintenance of the solar PV system is sustainable.

“We began to see the results of this initiative almost immediately. Electricity generation began soon after the project was inaugurated and the output has been very accurate to the predictions by GIZ. We are thrilled to be known as a solar-powered stadium,” says Mr. Rohit Pandit. “As the game most-followed in India, it is essential for institutions like ours to step forward and take responsibility for the environment. For our part, we try to put out environment-friendly messaging for every match. Some of our recent matches have been almost-zero-waste, encouraging spectators to reduce, reuse and recycle. Within the next couple of years, we would like to see some of the other cricket grounds across Madhya Pradesh, and the country, embrace solar.”

As countries around the world gradually make the switch to renewable energy, the innovative use of spaces like these reflects on India’s solar scoreboard.



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