

Racism in International Sports: An Overview

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Abstract

Race, just as gender and caste, is a socially constructed concept having historical, political and economic underpinning to it. The 'biological/scientific' basis of race and ethnicity was grossly misused to justify slavery, colonial conquests and discrimination even in modern independent nation states. It was taken upon himself by the white man his burden to 'civilise' the 'Other'. The other was first 'discovered', then 'classified', then 'civilised', further 'represented' and finally 'empowered'-all by the white male supremacy. And that, more or less, is the history of race and ethnic relations across the world. However, this 'biological/scientific' enterprise has been discredited, debunked and discarded for good. Racism, as a systemic form of discrimination, has entrenched many societies at varying levels and manifests in different sectors/ fields. And sport, being an integral part of the society, is no exception. Racism in sport is a complex issue. Racism will remain in varying forms and degrees, covertly and overtly, unless there is a marked and conscious effort in tackling and overcoming the issue. Even though sport does provide an excellent vehicle for establishing norms of behaviour that can be emulated by the rest of society, the ugly face of racism tends to divide people. In short, though sport does have a magical unifying spirit, racial discrimination does hamper that unifying spirit. Thus, even when there are serious attempts to address the issue head on, it is a fact that race and ethnic differences continues to shape the life chances of racial and ethnic minorities across the world.

Keywords: Racism, Discrimination, Sports, Biological Science.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines racism as the "belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races" and the expression of such prejudice, while the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines it as a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority or inferiority of a particular racial group, and alternatively that it is also the prejudice based on such a belief.¹

The idea of race² and racism, as we understand today, is a very modern phenomenon. It came along with Europe colonising the America, Africa and Asia. However, the idea

¹ Cfr <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racism>

² Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "Racial Formations", in Charles A Gallagher (ed.), *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, New York, McGraw- Hill, 2009, p. 18. They view race as a social concept because the idea of race has changed over time, the categories of race are not discrete, and the definition of race change from country to country. They argue that the dominant reason to categorise human beings based on skin colour is as arbitrary as grouping people on the basis of, say, height, weight, eye colour, blood type or finger length.

and the practice itself have changed over time. That is, the meaning, definition and the context of the concept have changed at different points in history. It is a fact that the acts and practices of racism, just as sexism and casteism, have also undergone marked transformation, even as all these discriminations operate both at the individual as well as institutional levels. Omi and Winant argue that race must be understood "as an unstable and 'decentred' complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggles."³

Racism is generally defined as actions, practices, or beliefs that reflect the racial worldview: the ideology that humans are divided into separate and exclusive biological entities called "races". This ideology entails the belief that members of a race share a set of characteristic traits, abilities, or qualities; that traits of personality, intellect, morality, and other cultural behavioural characteristics are inherited; and that this inheritance means that races can be ranked as innately superior or inferior to others. This segregation of humanity, in turn, acts as a justification for the non-equal treatment of members of that race. The term is commonly used negatively and is usually associated with race-based prejudice, violence, dislike, discrimination, oppression, and at times annihilation. This negative feeling towards an individual/group of people can be termed as xenophobia a strong belief that members of a particular group are superior to the rest of the society subsequently, the 'other' is created and is treated unequally and many a times persecuted too. Thus, racism involves 'inferiorisation', antipathy, bigotry, hostility and hatred practiced by one section against other section(s) of the population.

In day to day life, the racial 'classification' of people is done by considering their skin colour, hair texture, eye shape, ethnic background, accent/dialect etc. But, in actuality, the racial classification is done primarily on the basis of physical characteristics/traits of people that a society/majority chooses to value or devalue depending upon their will/wish. And this decision, inevitably, is a product of a set of social, political, historical and economic conditions. Hence, it can be argued that racism does not originate from the existence of 'races', rather racism creates 'races' through a process of social division into categories: thus, anybody can be racialised, independently of their cultural, religious differences. Since it is a socially constructed phenomenon, it is very much possible to imagine and construct the society in a different way, devoid of this menace.

Racism and racial discrimination are often used to describe discrimination on an ethnic or cultural basis as well. W. E. B. Du Bois, the great American philosopher, sociologist and civil rights leader argued that, in making the difference between races, it is not race that we think about, but culture. Du Bois further argued in his most famous work *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), that "the problem of the twentieth century

³ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

is the problem of color-line."⁴ In reality, race is a product of the historical, social and political forces of a given time. Marxists would argue that race is an ideological tool used by the ruling class to divide the working class movement, and thus to further the interest of the bourgeoisie.⁵

Race and ethnicity are intertwined in every aspect of day to day life. At the most basic level, race was defined as group-based differences rooted in biology, often manifested by the colour of the skin (black, brown, yellow, white etc.) and physical appearances/ characteristics (shape, size, texture of the hair, accent, dialect etc.), whereas ethnicity is used to group people who share a set of cultural practices. Ethnicity meant a sense of common ancestry, based on cultural affinities, linguistic heritage, religious affiliations, claimed kinship and/or some physical traits.

Racism, which is the attribution of 'natural' characteristics to groups of human beings, came into full-scale existence in the last few centuries, largely in relation with colonialism. Cornell and Hartmann argue that race is a result of early globalisation/ colonialism, when Europeans first 'discovered', then classified, and went on to colonise the other.⁶ In order to justify the brutalities of conquest and subjugation, the non-white peoples conquered by the colonial powers had to be viewed, and were viewed, as less than human. Frantz Fanon, through his concept of 'negritude', analyse the racist and colonising project of white European culture, that is, the totalising, hierarchical worldview that needs to set up the black human being as "negro" so it has an "other" against which to define itself.⁷

The new biological sciences and genetics of that time came in handy for this purpose of 'othering'. This biological/essentialist view of race and ethnicity was (mis) used to rationalise and defend slave trade and colonialism; and the classification of the whites and the 'Other' resulted in the 'civilising mission' of the world. Subsequently, physical characteristics like skin colour, shape and size were to be taken as representing some inherent biological and genetic features which had larger implications. The dominance was asserted to be the result of the 'natural' (biological, genetic) superiority of white European peoples, who had the god-given charge of caring for the 'lesser' peoples of the world. It was taken upon himself by the white man his burden to 'civilise' the 'Other'. The other was first 'discovered', then 'classified', then 'civilised', further 'represented' and finally 'empowered' all by the white male supremacy. The inhuman treatment meted out to the 'other' pre-supposes a worldview which establishes the white European as the 'Children of God' and the others who are to be saved. The idea

⁴ Cfr Charles A Gallagher (ed.), *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 2009, p.3. Also see <http://www.iep.utm.edu/dubois>

⁵ See Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, "Race, Class and Marxism," in *Socialist Worker*, January, 2011, (www.socialistworker.org).

⁶ See Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann, *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Pine Forge Press, 2007.

⁷ For details see, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/fanon/>

of race was a significant factor in this worldview, making it, more or less, the history of race and ethnic relations across the world. However, this 'biological/scientific' enterprise has been discredited, debunked and discarded for good.

Philosophers and writers have generously contributed to this 'civilizing mission'. Rudyard Kipling's poem *The White Man's Burden*⁸ (1899) is one of the most (in) famous illustrations of the belief in the inherent superiority of the European culture over the rest of the world. David Hume, the great English Philosopher wrote:

I am apt to suspect the negroes and in general all other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to whites. There never was a civilised nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the whites, such as the ancient Germans, the present Tartars, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular.⁹

Racist ideology thus helped legitimize subjugation and the dismantling of the traditional societies of indigenous peoples, and these were regarded as humanitarian obligations as a result of the racist beliefs.

Inevitably, these acts of creating the 'other' involved issues of power, privilege and hierarchy. Thus race relations involves power relations from the basic one of defining the other to the more expansive power to deprive certain people of their social, political and economic rights and benefits, and in extreme cases, their lives too. Peggy McIntosh, a white American Feminist and anti-racist activist, while listing 26 privileges a white person enjoys in the United States, views the white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets; an invisible weightless backpack of special provisions, which the whites are conditioned to be oblivious about its existence. She argues that these privileges result in an unearned advantage and conferred dominance to the whites. "Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress, and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit in turn upon people of color."¹⁰

Howard Zinn argues that racism, as we see it today, has its origin/root in modern slavery. Zinn views that American slavery employed in plantation and mining was lifelong, morally crippling, and the cruellest in history. It became cruellest owing to the frenzy for limitless profit by the capitalist agriculturalists and to the reduction of the slaves to less than human status by the use of racial hatred, based on skin colour; where white was master and black was the slave. The white/black colour binary became rigid and was enforced forcefully. While white is seen as 'pure', racial mixing makes the white, non-white, and in turn, impure/filthy.

⁸ For the poem, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_White_Man%27s_Burden

⁹ Cfr Aaron Garrett, "Hume's Revised Racism Revisited" in *Hume Studies*, XXVI, (April 2000), 1, 171-178.

¹⁰ Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack", 1989. See, <http://www.library.wisc.edu/edvrc/docs/public/pdfs/LIReadings/InvisibleKnapsack.pdf>

By 1619, a million blacks had already been brought from Africa to South America and the Caribbean, to the Portuguese and Spanish colonies, to work as slaves...by 1800, 10 to 15 million blacks had been transported as slaves to the Americas, representing perhaps one-third of those originally seized in Africa. It is roughly estimated that Africa lost 50 million human beings to death and slavery in those centuries we call the beginnings of modern Western civilization, at the hands of slave traders and plantation owners in Western Europe and America, the countries deemed the most advanced in the world.¹¹

This connection of racism with the European-based colonialism/imperialism is not to say that cultures of non-white peoples, whether Chinese or Japanese or the Africans themselves, have lacked systems of discrimination similar to racism. In India, discrimination based on caste was widespread for centuries, and is still prevalent in varied forms across the country. It is simply that the European form of racism has been dominant in the world over most of the last centuries, hence wider ramifications, and has been linked with the strongest and the cruellest forms of oppression.

In politics, racism is commonly located on the far right due to their common association with nativism, exclusion and xenophobia. In history, racism has been a major part of the political and ideological underpinning of not only genocides such as the holocaust, but also in colonial conquests. It was also a driving force behind the transatlantic slave trade, the racial segregation in the US, and the apartheid in South Africa.

History has shown us how the Nazis considered Jews, Gypsies, Poles and other Slavic people such as the Russians, Ukrainians, Czechs and anyone else who were not an "Aryan" according to the Nazis race terminology to be sub-human. The Nazis rationalised that the Germans, being a super human race, had a biological right to displace, eliminate and enslave inferiors. Some 6 million Jews were killed by the Nazis during the Holocaust. In the longer term, the Nazis wanted to exterminate some 30-45 million Slavs. After the World War II, under the 'Big Plan', the eventual expulsion of more than 50 million non-Germanised Slavs of Eastern Europe through forced migration, beyond the Ural Mountains and into Siberia. In their place, Germans would be settled in an extended "living space" (Lebensraum) of the 1000-Year Empire!

Movements against racism and racial discrimination promote an egalitarian society in which people are not discriminated against their race. The African-American Civil Rights Movement in the United States and the Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa have achieved great deal in overcoming racism in their countries. It is a fact that owing to such movements, both at the national and international levels, various governments have passed hate crime laws and have initiated affirmative actions designed to address racism. At the international level, there were concerted effort in

¹¹ Howard Zinn, "Drawing the Color Line", in Charles A. Gallagher (ed.), *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 2009, pp.10-12.

addressing the issues of race and racial discrimination. One of the first landmarks was the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948. Article 2 of the UN Declaration states: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."¹²

The UNESCO has marked March 21 as the yearly International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in commemorating the Sharpeville massacre.¹³ On 21 March 1960, in the township of Sharpeville, the South African police opened fire on student demonstrators peacefully protesting against the apartheid regime, killing 69 people and injuring many more. The crowd had gathered outside the police station to protest South Africa's "pass laws", which restricted the movement of coloured people in white areas. The Sharpeville massacre prompted the first resolution from the United Nations Security Council calling on the government of South Africa to abandon apartheid and to instead initiate measures aimed at bringing about racial harmony based on equality. It also led to the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution 2142 (XXI) on 26 October 1966, during its 21st Session, proclaiming 21 March, the international day for the elimination of racial discrimination to be commemorated annually.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted by the General Assembly [Resolution 2106 (XX)] on 21 December 1965, "the term "racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life." As per the Convention, there is no distinction between the terms racial discrimination and ethnic discrimination, and superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and that there is no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice, anywhere. The Convention also urged all nations to undertake measures and policies to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin.¹⁴

The UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice of 27 November 1978, under Article 2, in unequivocal terms, debunked all racial superiority:

Any theory which involves the claim that racial or ethnic groups are inherently superior or inferior, thus implying that some would be entitled to dominate or

¹² For the full text of the Declaration, see <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

¹³ For details, see <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/004/45/IMG/NR000445.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁴ For the full text of the Resolution see, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx>

eliminate others, presumed to be inferior, or which bases value judgments on racial differentiation, has no scientific foundation and is contrary to the moral and ethical principles of humanity.¹⁵

The United Nations has organised three world conferences on combating racism and racial discrimination, the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 8 September 2001 being the latest. The first two world conferences were held in Geneva in 1978 and 1983 respectively.¹⁶

It is well acknowledged that race, just as gender and caste, is also a socially constructed concept having historical, political and economic underpinning to it. Racial discrimination will remain in varying forms and degrees, covertly and overtly, unless there is a marked and conscious effort in tackling and overcoming the issue. Sweeping it under the carpet or denying its existence or simply turning a blind eye towards it will be of no use at all. Even when there are serious attempts to address the issue head on, it is a fact that race and ethnic differences continues to shape the life chances of racial and ethnic minorities across the world.

Racism in Sport

Racism in sports is a problem which is manifest around the world. It has led to a wide range of controversial incidents including the events leading to and during the 1936 Olympics, events in apartheid South Africa, boycott of international games and events etc. During the 1976 Montreal Olympics, 28 African countries announced their boycott of the games, refusing to participate alongside New Zealand, whose national rugby team had embarked on a controversial tour of apartheid South Africa that summer, in defiance of an informal but widely observed international athletics embargo on the country. Apartheid South Africa itself was banned from the Olympics from 1964 (Tokyo) till 1992 (Barcelona), by when the country became free from apartheid.

The Berlin Olympic Games of 1936 were a showcase for Nazi arrogance and racial hatred. Hitler saw the games as an opportunity to promote his government and the ideals of racial supremacy. From the start, there was opposition to the Olympic Games being held in Germany, for the contempt of the Nazis for fair play and their sordid exploitation of the Games. Despite this resentment, the Olympic Games continued. Spain and the Soviet Union were the only countries that fully boycotted the games. American sprinters Sam Stoller and Marty Glickman, the only two Jews on the U.S. Olympic team, were pulled from the 4 × 100 relay team on the day of the competition, leading to speculation that U.S. Olympic committee did not want to add to the embarrassment of Hitler by having two Jews win gold medals.

¹⁵ For the full text of the Declaration see, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13161&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁶ For the full text of the Durban Declaration, see <http://www.un.org/WCAR/durban.pdf>

Hitler called for a rematch of the quarterfinals match to discount Peru's 4-2 win over Austria. The Peruvian national Olympic team refused to play the match again and withdrew from the games. During the games, the Nazis demoted Captain Wolfgang Fürstner, the half-Jewish commandant of the Olympic Village, and replaced him with Werner von Gilsa. After the games' conclusion, Fürstner, a career officer, committed suicide when he learned that the Nuremberg Laws has classified him as a Jew.

However, the 1936 Olympics will also be remembered for the legendary friendship between African-American Jesse Owens and the white 'Aryan' Luz Long of Germany. Owens won the gold medal in long jump and Long came second. The two athletes went on to do their lap of honour, arm in arm, in front of the dignitaries of the Nazi regime. Ever since, Jesse Owens and Luz Long became true global icons in the fight against racism.

It is to be noted that sport in itself does not induce racism. Rather, it is the people that participate in the playing, organization, and implementation of sports bring racism into sports. Racism in sport can include: discrimination, harassment, stereotyping, vilification by players directed at other players; by spectators directed at players; or racist behaviour among rival spectator groups which spill over into the streets. It also includes the actions of sporting officials and coaches, as well as media commentators. The golf, baseball, basketball and the football league in the United States, football in the European league and cricket are real hotspots of racial tensions.

It is also noteworthy that many nations have used sports in order to battle the overarching racism in their societies. Sport is meant to be a colour blind activity that adheres to the notions of fair play and competition. Sport at its best is inclusive, generous-hearted and fundamentally multicultural - based on values such as teamwork, loyalty, merit and self-control. Sport is also a tool for civic education which help to develop important individual and social competences, and thus to know one another better and live together better. The vision of Olympism - to contribute to building a better world through sport - amply shows the importance of sport in society. The three Olympic values of "striving for excellence", "demonstrating respect" and "celebrating friendship" very well stand for a dignified and harmonious world. However, sport being an integral part of society, reflects society, and is troubled by racism. Besides, in sport, the chances of invoking racial taunts are even higher because of two reasons: one, it is the easiest way to provoke and unsettle the opponent, and second, many of the sport involve close physical contact.

In sport, the stereotype that African-Americans are less intelligent, more likely to leave education in pursuit of professional sport, more prone to drug use, petty crimes and violence, especially against women, than the rest of the population, and that they are a lazy lot living off the state welfare has gained wide currency, especially so in the United States. Black men are seen as symbols of brute, crude macho power and sexual prowess. In sports, it is reinforced with even greater vigour owing to two reasons:

a) because of the dominant presence of African-Americans in sports, especially in basketball, football, boxing etc.; b) sport is an activity that is highly competitive and a certain amount of aggression very well suits it. The whites tend to 'think black' when they think about major sports. Then the black sportsperson who is accused/caught of crime becomes the face on media, and 'represents' the entire community. People like Ben Johnson, Marion Jones, O.J. Simpson, Mike Tyson, Tiger Woods, Kobe Bryant are easily the fallen guys, representing the whole African-Americans. Don Mcpherson argues that, "[f]ootball and basketball mean black. When public talk about gender violence and athletes, it talks black."¹⁷

Another argument to reaffirm the stereotype of an aggressive athlete (read black) is that sport people are given training to be aggressive on field, and it is only natural that they carry that behaviour to off field as well. Applying the same logic then, the police, para-military and military personnel, who are given lethal training, should also be prone to the spill over of their official behaviour to their private spaces. But no one is making a connection here in this case! In reality, there are studies which have proved that the crime rates among the players in the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the national Football League (NFL) are far less than the crime rates among the general population of the same age group.¹⁸

Rosalyn Dunlap, an African-American and a five-time All American Sprinter, forcefully debunks the stereotypical link between the male athletes (read black) and gender violence, by arguing that

there are no men who should be exempted from being educated about issues of gender violence although many believe they are. It is a problem for naval commanders, day care providers, fraternities, guys in a bar, in corporations, in halls of higher education and, yes, on athletic teams. But no more so on athletic teams.¹⁹

In sports too, the international organizations like the UN and UNESCO intervenes in combating racism and racial discrimination. The fact that 'Racism and Sport' was/is the central focus of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination this year (21 March 2013) stands testimony to the importance these international organizations attach in fighting this menace. The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, in his statement on the 2013 theme of 'Racism and Sport', urges, "we must join forces to end racism, and sport can help reach this goal. On this International Day, let us recommit to ending racial discrimination and realizing our vision of justice, equality and freedom from fear for all."²⁰

¹⁷ Cfr Richard E Lapchick, "Sport in America: The New Racial Stereotypes", in Charles A Gallagher (ed.), *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 2009, p. 333.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

¹⁹ Cfr *Ibid.*, p. 333.

²⁰ For details see, <http://www.un.org/en/events/racialdiscriminationday/>

The UNESCO and the Spanish football club, FC Barcelona has signed a partnership agreement on 23 November 2007. The central objective of which is to raise awareness on the role of education and sport in the development and well-being of children and youth, and in the promotion of dialogue, mutual understanding and social cohesion. It also intends on using sports as a means to combat racism and discrimination, with emphasis on children and youth.²¹

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has also taken a strong stand on fighting racism and racial discrimination. The sixth principle of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism clearly states that "any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement."²²

The statutes of the global governing body of football FIFA forbid racism and discrimination, under Article 3 (Non-discrimination and stance against racism) stating: "Discrimination of any kind against a country, private person or groups of people on account of ethnic origin, gender, language, religion, politics or any other reason is strictly prohibited and punishable by suspension or expulsion."²³ FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter, in his statement commemorating UN day for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, on 21 March 2013, stated that, "FIFA will work tirelessly, with all of our partners in football, towards the day when racism no longer shames our beautiful game. That is the FIFA promise."²⁴

The FIFA, at its 63rd Congress held in Mauritius on 30-31 May 2013, adopted a resolution on the fight against Racism and discrimination stipulated that the following measures shall be implemented on a global level in football: "competition organisers shall establish a concrete action plan, showing their intention to fight all forms of racism and discrimination among their players, officials and supporters."²⁵

A resolution adopted at the Extraordinary Congress of FIFA, held in Buenos Aires on 7 July 2001, requires all persons involved directly or indirectly with the sport of football at all levels and in all countries to join a concerted action to exchange information and experiences in order to combat effectively and conclusively all manifestations of racism within the game, by denouncing and sanctioning all persons indulging in racism in any form.²⁶

²¹ For details see, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/fight-against-discrimination/partnership-with-fc-barcelona/>

²² For the Olympic Charter see, http://www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf

²³ For the full text of the FIFA Charter see, <http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/generic/01/66/54/21/fifastatutes2012e.pdf>

²⁴ For the full text of the statement see, <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13172&LangID=e/>

²⁵ For details of the resolution see, <http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afsocial/>

²⁶ For details see, <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/bodies/news/newsid=78421/>

The FIFA has launched its 'Say no to Racism' campaign in April 2006, and months later at the FIFA World Cup, large 'Say no to Racism' banners were displayed prominently during the pre-match formalities, while anti-racism mini-spots were made available for free to all TV broadcasters of the tournament. In football, non-governmental organisations like 'Let us kick racism out of Football' and 'Show racism the red card' working towards the motto of non-discrimination, equality and fair play.²⁷ I believe that creating general awareness among the larger public and including the issues related to the race question in general education has very significant role to play in tackling the issue: education can go a long way in inculcating tolerance and addressing prejudice in society.

Conclusion

Racism is a systemic form of discrimination and it involves questions of power, privilege and hierarchy and becomes operational through the process of 'othering'. While in many countries overt and explicit racism has become increasingly taboo and considered a crime, an implicit kind is still maintained and practiced consciously or subconsciously. Even today, in the US, in Europe, and in many other parts of the world we can still see racism practiced overtly or covertly. And sport, being an integral part of society, is also affected. The concern and concerted effort put forward by the international agencies like the UN, UNESCO, IOC and the FIFA shows the gravity and urgency in combating the issue of racism and racial discrimination in general, and particularly in sports.

Unfortunately, despite all the best efforts put forward, the menace of racism continues in the society. So much so, as Charles Gallagher grimly paints, "when it comes to race and ethnic relations in the United States, we are two nations: the nation we imagine ourselves to be depicted in the media and the nation we actually inhabit."²⁸ Du Bois too painted a bleak picture in the beginning of the last century: "An American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings."²⁹ How disheartening and disappointing is to have a century lost in re-imagining a better world. This is not to deny the fact that indeed progress has been made. But unless we make a conscious effort in taking the issue head-on, the progress would be piece-meal. It is high time that we radically turn around the dominant debate around race relations. As Cornel West set forth; "to engage in a serious discussion of race in America, we must begin not with the problems of black people but with the flaws of American society, flaws rooted in historic inequalities and longstanding cultural stereotypes."³⁰ Further, West advocates a new framework of moral reasoning, wherein no one is demonised, and

²⁷ For details see, <http://www.kickitout.org/> and <http://www.theredcard.ie/>

²⁸ Charles A Gallagher (ed.), *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 2009, p. xi.

²⁹ Cfr <http://www.iep.utm.edu/dubois/>

³⁰ Cornel West, *Race Matters*, Boston, Beacon Press, 2001, p.3.

the need is for the creation of a genuine multiracial democracy. Frantz Fanon also articulate a radical anti-racist humanism, an expansive conception of humanity, that adhered neither to assimilation to a white-supremacist mainstream nor to reactionary philosophies of black superiority.³¹

³¹ See, Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by Charles Lam Markmann, London, Pluto Press, 1986.