INTRODUCTION

Cricket, as a game, evolved from the ancient past and its genesis remains in obscurity. There are divergent and controversial theories with regard to the homeland, date of inception and the development of the game cricket. But, the mostly accepted theory of the origin of the game cricket was that, as a game of bat and ball, it was sponsored as a church event to promote community spirit, entered France and reached South-East England. In spite of the existence of the divergent theories, the game cricket is believed to have been nurtured and developed mostly by the British, and hence, during the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries; cricket became a popular game in England. England of 19th century gave the world not only gifts like the rail road, electricity and the theory of evolution, but also games like football, rugby and hockey. The major team sports were all invented in the island kingdom, as were the popular racket games of badminton, table tennis, and tennis. The early modern England has verily been the “Game Master” of the world. Of all the sports it gave birth to, cricket is the one game which the English themselves recognize and uphold as their national game.
The origin and development of cricket in India is a colonial legacy. The first mention of cricket in this country dates back to 1721, when British sailors played a cricket match among themselves in the Port of Cambay, where their ship was anchored for some technical repair. There is another reference to a cricket match played between British soldiers and the officials of the English East India Company in 1751, but there is no mention about the venue of the match. It may be correct to state that the game cricket was introduced in India by Her Majesty Queen Victoria's military men who used to indulge in this healthy and instructive pastime during early the days of the East India Company's rule. Sport, like the flag, first established itself along the coast of India before making its way into the interior parts. The first cricket club outside Britain was the Calcutta Cricket club which was founded in the year 1792. The club was a forum through which the British organized cricket matches which were played in the day and in the evenings; there used to be dinners and dances as well. The Madras Cricket Club was the next one to be established in India; followed by the Bombay Cricket Club in 1825. Later on, the game was introduced in all the military strongholds of the British territories namely Poona, Dum Dum, Allahabad, Ferozapore, Lahore, Umbala and Shimla.
Cricket and the establishment of cricket clubs were a source of comfort to the British colonial masters, since, through this game they could impose order in the areas under their control and also they could feel that they had even brought a piece of their country with them. It appears that in the beginning the British had no intention of teaching the Indians as to how to play the game. They invented the game at home, and played it in India as a welcome retreat from the utter strangeness of life in the colony. Though the game cricket began to spread in different parts of India, it remained essentially an English sport, as the game was played between the British military men and the British officials. To begin with the Indians merely watched the game as spectators and got fascinated in due course with the game and eventually grasped the basics of cricket. The Indians made cricket bats and balls with the help of local carpenters and cobblers. They began to play cricket among themselves and made themselves fit to play the game with the British army men and officials. The British Governors played a commendable role in nurturing the game in the provinces which they governed.

During the 1870s when Indians were acquiring a taste for competitive cricket, the two great gentlemen cricketers of England were
Lord Harris and Lord Hawke who later became Governors of the Presidency of Bombay. Still later, they were destined to become Presidents of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the most prestigious body in England and world cricket. Lord Harris pioneered and fostered the game in India; indeed, he gave to cricket unselfish service. Lord Harris might perhaps be considered the greatest administrator and missionary in the history of Indian cricket. It was also observed that it was Lord Harris's personal example that gave great impetus to sports of all kinds in Bombay. Lord Harris, as sage and statesman at once, saw that much of the friction between the Europeans and the natives of India could be removed by bringing the rulers and the ruled together by means of sports. While Lord Harris was the Governor of Bombay (1890-95) he took special steps to improve Indian cricket and helped to invigorate interest in the game among all classes of people. In fact, Lord Harris is regarded as the "father of Indian Cricket".

Cricket was brought to Madras by British soldiers who used to play the game as source of entertainment. Cricket became the usual sports affair when the Madras Cricket Club (MCC) was founded in 1846 by Alexander Arbuthnot the then Chief Secretary to Madras Government. The members of the club were badly in need of play
grounds of their own to conduct cricket matches. Initially, the MCC began to use the Island Ground for playing cricket but the ground was not suitable for the game and hence they appealed to the Government of Madras to allot an area in Chepauk Palace grounds which the Government of Madras had acquired from the Nawab of Arcot, Ghulam Muhammad Ghouse. After the death of the Nawab, the MCC was granted permission by the Government to enclose a portion in the Chepauk premises as cricket ground. The MCC spent Rs.730/- in 1865 for leveling the ground where a pavilion was built in the year 1866. Cricket matches were conducted at Chepauk grounds for eleven years, but playing of cricket had to be again shifted to the Island Grounds, since the Government of Madras began digging the Buckingham Canal through the Chepauk grounds following a great famine in the Presidency in 1869. The playing of cricket remained in the Island Grounds up to 1876-78.

Until the year 1909, only Europeans played cricket in Madras by inviting their counterparts in Calcutta and Ceylon. Apart from this, the English team from London visited Madras several times. The people of Madras were very much drawn towards cricket, and formed clubs for Indians to play cricket. In those days an invitation or even a command
to play a match with the Madras Cricket Club on their grounds was
demed to be a great honour in spite of the denial of entry into the
Pavilion to the members of the Indians team. A sheltering tree served
as a Pavilion to the members of the Indian clubs; it is unfortunate racial
discrimination infiltrated even sports fields.

The name Buchi Babu is synonymous with Cricket in Madras. He
has been rightly called as the “father of Madras cricket”. Born in a well
to do family, Buchi Babu was brought up in the English manner and
inherited all the good habits and manners of an English noble. He was
greatly instrumental in training promising and talented young cricketers
by providing all the equipments they needed, like clothes, boots, pads
and gloves. The most striking contribution of Buchi Babu towards the
development of Cricket in Madras was the founding of a native cricket
club called the Madras United Club and paving the way for establishing
equality between the Indians and the British while playing and watching
cricket matches.

Buchi Babu had a good cricket skill and also had collected a good
local cricket team. The British had good respect for Buchi Babu and his
cricket team and wanted to play cricket with them. But Buchi Babu laid
down certain conditions stipulating that he and his men would play cricket matches against the MCC only if they were allowed to use the pavilion and have lunch with the British and free and fair treatment without any prejudice such as race, colour and power. These conditions as laid down by Buchi Babu were accepted by the British and as a result, a free and fair playing atmosphere came into existence.

Buchi Babu wanted to start a native cricket club to promote the game and the related activities and also to play matches against the British. He felt the need for forming a club where even ordinary Indians could join, play and mix freely with the others. As he was born in a well-to-do family, he had no problems in raising funds to accomplish his goal. There were men like Rao Bhagadur and N.R. Balakrishna Mudaliar who readily extended a supporting hand to Buchi Babu in establishing a native cricket club. As a result of this effort, the Madras United Club (MUC) was born in 1888, which, was later destined to become the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA). This club was located at the Frazer Bridge Road, Park Town in North Madras. The MUC became a nursery of sports, especially cricket, and was instrumental in discovering the local talent in cricket. After the
establishment of the club, Buchi Babu arranged for regular fixtures with the MCC.

Buchi Babu had interaction with the MCC and its Captain. Partridge managed to fix the Presidency matches to be played between the MCC and the MUC. The first Presidency match was played in the year 1908, but Buchi Babu was not there to play the match since he died before the commencement of the match. The European team was led by Partridge and MUC played under the Captaincy of B.S. Ramulu Naidu. The Annual Presidency Match fixture was held during the Pongal holidays, and the contesting teams fought on the field with a genuine spirit of sportsmanship.

The Presidency matches were conducted under the joint auspices of MUC and MCC when gate collections were done for the first time in 1921 and the two teams shared the collection. At this stage, there arose a need for the formation of an integrated forum for the purpose of making selection for respective matches. The First Executive Committee of the Indian Cricket Federation (ICF) was constituted with P. Subbaroyan as President, T. Govindarajalu as Secretary and Treasurer and C.D. Parthasarathy as Assistant Secretary. The ICF had the honour of conducting the first cricket league Tournament in India when it
decided to organize a competition in Madras in 1932. As many as 18 teams took part, and the Triplicane Cricket Club earned the distinction of becoming the winner.

In fact, the MCC and the ICF functioned as rival bodies in promoting cricket in Madras. Both had to come to an understanding when the English team under Jorden visited Madras in 1934. Out of necessity, the MCC had to recognize the status of the Indian Cricket Federation. In the span of the next three months, the two rival bodies realized the need to come together, negotiated with each other, finally put an end to their rift and decided to act together in the interest of cricket in Madras. This led to the formation of the Madras Cricket Association in 1934 in which all the 45 city clubs became members. On 30th April 1935, a meeting of representatives of all Clubs was held at the Madras Cricket Club under the Chairmanship of Sir Daniel Richmond and P.Subbaroyan was elected as President, and K.S.Ranga Rao as Secretary and Treasurer. The Indian Cricket Federation was dissolved in 1936 and transferred its funds of Rs.3900/- to the Madras Cricket Association. The same office-bearers together with N.Sambandam rendered their services to this Association till 1944. This Association was registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1806 on the first day of May 1953 with headquarters at Madras.
The Registered Office of the Association is located at M.A. Chidambaram Stadium (earlier Chepauk), Victoria Hostel Road, Chennai. The Association has a flag in blue colour with a crest and the Temple Tower in golden letter Tamil Nadu Cricket Association under it in red colour. The area under the jurisdiction of this Association comprises the entire State of Tamil Nadu. The Association is comprised of the following classes of members such as Patron in Chief, Patrons, Honorary Members, Associate Members, Cricket Members, Sports Boards of Universities, Zonal Clubs, Clubs and the Office Bearers.

As defined by the constitution of the TNCA, the Head of the State or any other distinguished person may be invited to be the Patron-in-Chief and the following persons, by virtue of their position are invited by the General Body to be its Patrons, viz., The Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, the Chief Minister of the State, the Mayor of Madras, The Minister for Sports and Education of the State, the Vice-Chancellor of the Universities of the State, the General Officer commanding of the Southern Area.
Review of Literature

There are books and articles on cricket in India. Some of the important works are listed below:

*Cricket Across the Seas* (1903) by P.F. Warner, *The Cricket Field* (1922) written by James Pycroft, *A History of Cricket* (1926) by H.S. Altham & E.W. Swanton, *Cricket* (1930) by Neville Cardus, *The Book of Cricket* (1934) by Pelham Warner, *History of Cricket* (1949) written by Eric Parker and *The English Game*, a Cricket anthology compiled by Gerald Brodribb provided a lot of insight into the History of Cricket. Among the above mentioned works, *A History of Cricket* by Altham and E.W. Swanton is only work of note pretending to be anything like complete history of the game. Many chapters, or articles, under a similar title have been written, but have been confined either to a period or to a locality. All the general authorities have been consulted and their forces have been handled well by the author in this book. *The Cricket Field* by Reverend James Pycraft is one of the classics of the game. Many editions of this book were published and the best of them was that edited by F.S. Ashley Cooper in 1922. *The English Game* compiled by Gerald Brodribb is an anthology for the first time of cricket in which the number of aspects of the game has been surveyed by the devoted great writers like James Love, E.V. Lucas and Andrew Long.
Ramachandra Guha is a historian, biographer and cricket writer who has held academic positions in India, the United States and Europe before settling down to become a full time writer in Bangalore. His book *Wickets in the East* (1992) provides sharp insights into the culture of the cities and states in which Indian Cricket was forged. *Spin and Other Turns* (1994), *A Corner of a Foreign Field - The Indian History of British Sport* (2002), and *The States of Indian Cricket* (2005) are to be mentioned here for their contribution to study the social history of Indian cricket.

In the above mentioned books on the History of Cricket in India, *Patrons, Players and the Crowd: The Phenomenon of Indian Cricket* by Richard Cashman should be mentioned for its exclusive nature. It is a work in which both the foundation of the game in India and its structure is described in their entirety. In this book, the first two chapters on English promoters and Indian Princes who patronized cricket in India are mainly based on newspaper material and published works and the other chapters on contemporary aspects of Indian cricket draw on interviews which were conducted during 1974-79 in India, England and Australia with players, commentators, writers, businessmen and variety of individuals with an interest in Cricket. *India's Captains from Nayudu to Ganguly* is a comprehensive account of the various aspects of cricket captaincy in India. It discusses the individual roles played by each captain from C.K. Nayudu in 1932 to Rahul Dravid in 2004 and unique strategies employed by them. It offers insights into the peculiar circumstances leading to the appointment of four captains in a single series in 1958-59, the controversy surrounding Krishnamachari Srikkanth's dismissal even after the team he led to Pakistan in 1989 performed so well and the reasons for Vijay Merchant never leading the country in an official Test and M.A.K. Pataudi becoming the youngster
ever Test Captain at the age of twenty one. It also analyses how the mantle of captaincy can affect the on field performance of even the best batsman in the World, Sachin Tendulkar, and what it takes to be Sourav Ganguly, India’s most successful captain. It is interesting and often proactive to the followers of the game.

Boria Majumdar, a Rhodes Scholar has been a visiting Lecturer at the University of Chicago and he recently completed his doctorate on the social history of Indian cricket at St. John’s College, Oxford University. His publications include *Twenty-Two Yards to Freedom – A Social History of Indian Cricket* (2004), *Cricketing Cultures in Conflict: World Cup 2003* (2004) and *Once Upon a Furore: Controversies of Indian Cricket* (2004) throw light on the social aspects that influenced Indian cricket. *Sport in South Asian Society Past and Present* (2005) edited by Boria Majumdar and J.A. Mangan consists largely of case studies.

*Buchi Babu (Father of Madras Cricket) and His Sporting Clan* (1993) by Sundaresan and Suryanarayan, *Mosquitoes and Other Jolly Rovers: The Story of Tamil Nadu Cricket* (2002) and *The Romance of Tamil Nadu Cricket* (2006) by V. Ramnarayan which was published as Tamil Nadu Cricket Association Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Volume has historical information pertaining to cricket in Tamil Nadu.
Sundaresan and Suriyanarayan in his book, *Buchi Babu (Father of Madras Cricket)* and *His Sporting Clan* vividly described the contribution made not only Buchi Babu but also the entire family to Madras sport. This book tells this stirring story in the words of several writers, many of them members of Buchi Babu Family.

research in providing information related to the sponsorship made by
the industries in Tamil Nadu.

Though all these materials help the present study, there is no
particular book or any other study which directly deals with the
formation of the TNCA and its allied activities. Hence, an attempt has
been made in this study to bring about a comprehensive and research
study on the origin and development of the game cricket in Madras
which led to the formation of the TNCA.

The present study employs historical narrative and descriptive analysis.

Objectives of the study
The study has been carried out with the following objectives:

Tracing the origin and development of cricket and its
development in various dimensions, describing the introduction and
development of the game cricket in India during the colonial period,
analyzing the development of cricket in India, the pioneer native cricket
clubs, their patrons and the communal interests associated therein,
examining the circumstances favouring the formation of the Tamil
Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA), describing the structure of the
TNCA and its administrative and social activities, and estimating the personal contributions of the Chief Patrons of the TNCA, discussing the functioning of the District Cricket Associations and the city clubs and studying the views held by Indian national leaders on the role played by cricket in India. The study concludes with the findings and offers a few suggestions.

The period of the study has been from the advent of cricket in Madras along with the British to the Platinum Jubilee Celebration of the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association in the year 2006.

DATA COLLECTION

For this study sources are available in abundance in the form of official records, letters, Agreements, Audited Statements, Correspondence, Resolutions, Souvenirs, Deeds, Reports, Statements and Audio-Visual cassettes at the office of the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association at Chennai, the BCCI Library in Bombay and the Tamil Nadu Archives. Secondary sources are available in plenty in the form of books and articles in the Dr.P.Subbaroyan Library at the TNCA and the Connemara Public Library at Chennai.
Chapters

With the cited objectives and for the sake of convenience, the entire study has been divided into six chapters apart from Introduction and Conclusion.

First Chapter Deals with the origin and development of cricket in India

Second Chapter Traces the Introduction and Development of Cricket in Chennai and the formation of the TNCA

Third Chapter Narrates the structure and administration of the TNCA.

Fourth Chapter Discusses the nature and functions of the City Cricket Clubs and the District Cricket Associations.

Fifth Chapter Describes with the development of cricket under the TNCA

Sixth Chapter Illustrates the contribution of International Cricketers of TNCA

Conclusion Contains the findings and suggestions.
CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF CRICKET IN INDIA

Cricket is a sport which may be said to have evolved from the medieval past. The exact origin of this sport is not known. Attempts to trace the origin of this sport have brought forth many theories, and the widely accepted theory of its origin is that it was devised by shepherds and farm workers in the wald, an area of dense woodland and clearing in South-East England that lies across Kent and Sussex.¹

According to certain cricket historians, cricket originated outside England and was brought to the island by the Normans after A.D 1066.² This theory has been substantiated by a number of claims. Objects shown in two modules in the Gandhara Galleries of Lahore Museum resemble very much bat and ball. The way a person grips the bat in the sculpture tempts to think that the game might have been played in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent during the time of Gautama the Buddha. Like other great recreations that are believed to have migrated via Persia and through Constantinople into Europe, historians also view that

¹ Sir Home Gordon, Sussex, (London : Convey Publications Ltd.,) p.11
cricket as a game of bat and ball, was probably sponsored as a church event to promote community spirit, entered France and reached south-east England. But most of the historians agree that this sport did originate in South-east England and dismiss theories as mere speculations.\(^3\)

There is no definite reference of cricket until A.D. 1597, and if it was played at all, it did not have sufficient popularity and sanctions like other games. It is known from a statute of King Edward IV in 1477-78 that he made the playing of a game which was similar to cricket called "handyn and handoute" illegal because it interfered with the compulsory practice of archery. But there is no evidence to suggest that "handyn and handoute" was a form of cricket.\(^4\)

In 1597 there was a dispute over a school's ownership of a plot of land in which a 59 year old Coroner, John Derrick, testified that he and his school friends had played Kreckett on the site fifty years earlier. This is generally considered to be the first definite mention of cricket in the English language. The school mentioned by him was the Royal

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Grammar School in Guildford in England. It is known from the above fact that the game was played from as early as 1550.5

From this period, there is more and more mention of cricket in records. The first definite mention of cricket in Kent was about a match at Chevening between two teams from the weald and the downs. In Sussex ecclesiastical court records reveal that two church members of Sidlesham in west Sussex did not attend church on Easter Sunday because they were busy playing cricket; they were fined 12 dollars each and also made to do penance.6

The Church Court records are useful to reconstruct the history of the game from 1611 to 1668. Several parishioners of Boxgrave near Chichester in West Sussex were prosecuted for playing cricket in a churchyard on Sunday the 5th of May, 1622. The contravention of a local bye-law concerns the breakage of church windows and the dangerous effects of the rule that allowed the batsman to hit the ball twice.7

Another court record reveals that a fatality occurred at Horsted Kaynes in East Sussex when a fielder called Jasper Vinall was struck on

6 op.cit., p.3.
the head by the batsman who was trying to hit the ball a second time to avoid being caught. Vinall is the earliest instance recorded in a coroner’s court which gave a verdict of misadventure.  

It is also known from this case that the games involving teams from different villages were played and Jasper Vinall and Batman Edward Tyre came from West Hoathly, an adjacent village.

The playing of cricket on Sunday was an offence as it is known from an ecclesiastical case admitted in 1628 East Lavant in Western Sussex. In this case the defendant argued in vain that he did not play during evening prayer time but only before and after. He was imposed a fine of 12 dollars, and ordered to do penance which involved confessing his guilt to the whole of East Lavant congregation on the following Sunday.

For the same offence, Henry Guffin, a curate at Ruckinge in Kent was prosecuted by an Archdeacon’s court in 1629 for playing cricket on a Sunday evening after prayers. He claimed that several of his fellow players were persons of repute and fashion. It indicates that cricket was

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8 Ibid., p.9.
also popular among the upper class people of the society. Similar cases were recorded in 1636 and 1637.  

In 1640, cricket was denounced as profane by the Puritan priests, particularly when it was played on Sundays. The decision of the Puritans at this time was significant as this was the year in which the Long Parliament first assembled and paved the way for the English Civil War.

It is important to mention that cricket was not banned though the Parliament closed down many theaters and also took stern action against certain sports during the English Civil War.

Another court case recorded the earliest organized match that took place at Coxheath in Kent on 29th May 1646. The case came to the court as a wager that was made at the game was not paid. The bet was for 12 candles and the participants in this match included the local gentry.

In 1652, a case registered at Cranbrook against John Rabson and others refers to a certain unlawful game called cricket. As Rabson was

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evidently a gentleman whereas the other defendantants were all working class, it shows that this sport bridged the various classes in the society. The cricket ball was first referred to in those terms in a book by Edward Phillips in the year 1658.

But with the fall of Puritanism cricket began to forge in England ahead and even abroad. It is noted that a match of *Krickett was* played at Aleppo between a group of men from His Majesty's ship *Assistance, Bristol and Royal Oak* which was lying off Antioch on 6th May 1676. Henry Tenoge, a naval chaplin, records this information in his diary and so the credit of being the first to sow the seeds of their national game on foreign soil goes to him.\(^{11}\)

Early references show that no stumps were used. But the bowler was required to get the ball past the striker and land it in a hole. Later that hole was marked by a piece of wood which led to the introduction of stumps.\(^{12}\)

The earliest match on record is to be found advertised in a periodical called "The Post Boy" on 30th March 1700 and took place on


Clapham Common. No match reports could be found also the results and scores remain unknown. In 1744 the first laws of the game were introduced and with those laws, the first recorded match between Kent and All England was played on 18th June of the same year at the Artillery Ground, Bunhill Fields, Finbury Square, Kent.13

Cricket was originally most popular in the Weald of Sussex and Kent and there the tree stumps were the objective of the man who bowled the ball. On the down lands, however, the lack of tree stumps forced the young shepherds to find an alternative. This they found in the wicket or gate of the sheep pens which consisted of two uprights and a detachable cross-bar called the bail.

The shape of the bat has changed considerably from time to time, but nothing was laid down as to the width of the bat until the 1774 edition of the laws and it is interesting to note that the width is the same even to day. The ball has been the same weight since 1774. But before 1774 it was between five and six ounces. Pads were invented in the 1930s. But they did not come into general use for 20 or 30 years. Willis, an enthusiastic cricketer was the first to employ the method of bowling.

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13 Ibid., p.22.
the round arm action. Gradually the game passed through many changes in the method of playing and attained its present set up.

Cricket was brought to India by the British officials, soldiers, and the servants of the English East India Company. The game was played as a part time sport to while away the time and also to get relieve from mental stress and homesickness. Initially the game was played among Englishmen only and Indians who used to watch the game as spectators were gradually attracted by it and learnt the art of playing cricket. The first recorded match was played in Cambay in the 1780's. But it was Calcutta which was the first centre. The first cricket club outside Britain was the Calcutta Cricket Club founded in 1792.

Bombay is unquestionably the birth place and homeland of Indian cricket. It was in Bombay the Indian cricket was born. The Parsis were the pioneers of the fame and organized the first club, the Orientals, in 1848 even before the days of the Sepoy Mutiny. This community of fire worshippers had fled their native Persia after the coming of Islam and settled along the coast of Western India. As they

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engaged themselves in trade and commerce, they brought themselves close to the rulers and to their culture than any other Indian community. Unlike other Indian communities, the Parsis quickly took to western dress, music and English language. With their flexible and fascinating character, half oriental and half occidental, they took readily to cricket also. They founded the Oriental Cricket Club in 1848.\textsuperscript{19}

Whereas the Calcutta Cricket Club, mostly a European affair, had been founded by the then Indian Country Army Officers and men figured as the main players of the Cricket Team. The first century in cricket was scored in the country by Robert Vansittart scoring 102 for Old Estonians against the Bengal Civil Services.\textsuperscript{20}

The Indian Parsis sent a team to England in 1861\textsuperscript{21}. The first English team came to India under the captaincy of G.F. Vernon in 1889-90 and played some games but it was not until 1892-93 first class cricket was played in India.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid.}, p.12.
It is certain that cricket was first introduced in this country by Her Majesty Queen Victoria’s military men who freely indulged in this healthy but instructive pastime during the early days of the British rule. As early as 1797 a match is said to have been played between the military and the Island of Bombay. Gradually the game was introduced in Poona, Calcutta, Dum Dum, Allahabad, Ferozapore, Lahore, Umbala and finally reaching up the hills of Simla and all the British military cantonments of the past. Some records show that the game was played even earlier to the date mentioned here.

The Indians fascinated by the virtues of the game gradually grasped its ideas, and in the course of time began to use the bats made by the local carpenter and the balls manufactured by the so called Mochi or cobblers, the bats and balls were the products of indigenous craftsmen. The Parsees were the foremost Indians who took to the game more methodically and seriously than any other community and formed their own Oriental Club at Bombay in 1848. Many Parsi clubs were formed in the 1850s and 1860s, named for Roman Gods like Jupiter and Mars and British statesmen like Gladstone and Ripon.23

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In those days cricket was commonly known as bat ball game. Then the Zoroastrian Cricket Club came in 1850. Underhand bowling and sweepings to the on side with a somewhat cross bat were two dominant factors of the early Parsi cricket.\(^\text{24}\) Over-arm bowling came into the game in the year 1867 when more Western methods of playing were introduced gradually. It is said that Robert Henderson of Surrey who came to Bombay in 1886 and whose name is still held in sincere reverence by the Parsis was chiefly responsible for the coaching of early Parsi cricketers. He taught them many fundamental principles of the game.\(^\text{25}\)

Having gained good experience and training through his coaching, the Parsis sent out their first team to England in 1886.\(^\text{26}\) They beat Normanhurst at Catsfield, lost 19 matches and drew 8.\(^\text{27}\) At the invitation of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, they had the honour of playing a match against Prince Christian Victor’s XI at Cumberland Lodge.\(^\text{28}\) The game having thus secured a strong footing evoked wider interest and enthusiasm all over the country and all communities now

began to feel a fondness for playing cricket, claiming steadily a particular season according to the conditions of weather in the different Provinces.

When Lord Harris assumed the Governorship of Bombay in 1890, a new era of progress of Indian cricket dawned. Born in Trinidad in 1851, the son of the island’s Governor, Harris played cricket for Eton and Cambridge before captaining England against its arch rival Australia. Later he became the President of the Marylbourne Cricket Club (MCC), the most powerful body in English and world cricket. His father served in India as the Civilian Governor of Trinidad and Madras. Harris himself lived in Madras as a young boy, cared for by an Indian bearer after his mother died. At thirteen, he was sent to Eton. After quarter of a century he returned to India. The years in between, were spent in serious pursuit of cricket. His love and intuition to see the game flourish in this country inspired each community.

The Ganeshkhind fixtures were regularly prepared during the season and His Excellency himself used to play the game most enthusiastically. After doing a good deal for the progress of cricket in

29 P.N. Sundaresan, *Not so unofficial*, p.4.
Bombay particular and Indian cricket in India general, Lord Harris retired from his high office. His successor Lord Wellingdon also came out with some burning desire for the promotion of cricket in India and it was during his regime that cricket saw a period of prosperity in the Bombay Presidency. Cricket in Bombay did not lack local patrons. The Hindu Cricket in Bombay Presidency owes its prosperity to the exertions of people like Permanand Das Jivnada, whose name the present P.J.Hindu Gymkhana bears in commemoration of his princely donation of Rs.10,000/-for its foundation. The subsequent progress of Hindu Cricket in Bombay was due to the untiring efforts of patrons like Gordhandas Khatau, Velinkar, D.Dharmsi etc., who did their best to invigorate interest in cricket among their Community. To the Government of Lord Harris, the Hindus owe a deep debt of gratitude for the generous grant of land on which their Gymkhana stands today.

Religious distinctions and caste inhibitions among the Hindus interfered now and then which at one time greatly interfered with the progress of their cricket. Lord Harris narrated a typical case of caste prejudice impairing the cricket career of Palwankar. Baloo, an orthodox Hindu in the following observation: “At the Bombay Gymkhana, there

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33 W.D. Begg, *Cricket and Cricketers in India*, op.cit., p.18.
was a Hindu professional bowler who one day came to the Secretary and told him that he was obliged to leave. The Secretary expressed his regret and asked the bowler if he could do anything to change his mind; was he receiving enough pay? The Hindu replied that he was getting very good pay but he was going because his caste would not allow him to play with Englishmen who ate beef and he went". However in due course of time, the Hindus began to mix freely dining and drinking on the same table with the people of different religious persuasions.34

The Hon'ble Chunnilal V. Mehta was one of the most prominent figures in the galaxy of Hindu cricketers. For many years, he was the Captain of the Representative Hindu XI team and played an important part in the development of Hindu cricket in Bombay. It was introduced in Bombay and Hindus were admitted as the third competing community. At first the Parsis who were having an annual fixture against the Presidency would not agree to this proposal on the ground that the days suggested were cold and too short, but later on they consented to participate and the Hindus won twice in this competition, viz. in 1906 and 1907 with a good margin of 238 runs in the latter year. Tracing back the origin and development of early Hindu cricket in India,

34 W.D. Begg, op.cit., p.18.
one can find a "Veteran Brigade" who laid the concrete foundation of Hindu cricket in this country. Among them were P. Baloo, Telang, G.R. Banda, G.R. Kirtikar, K.A.Date, M.D. Pai and D.M. Chonkar \(^{35}\)

Mohammedans did not have a recognized club of their own till 1883 when the first Mohammedan Cricket Club was established and this became the Mohammedan Gymkhana in 1883.

The first triangular tournament between the Europeans, the Parsis and the Hindus was played in Bombay in the year 1907. It was triangular for five years during which time the Parsis won twice, Europeans once and no result was reached in 1909-10. In the year 1911, the only and the first All India Team went to England under the Captaincy of the Maharaja of Patiala played 23 matches, won 6, lost 15 and drew 2. The Indian team was occasionally assisted by Prince Gaekwar of Baroda and Mane. Bangiana of Ajmer who were in England at that time.\(^{36}\)

In 1919 the Bombay Triangular became Quadrangular with the entry of the Mohammedans.\(^{37}\) In the twenty five years of the

\(^{35}\) W.D.Begg, op.cit., p.19.  
\(^{36}\) Ibid., p.20-22.  
Quadrangular (1912-1936), the tournament was held at Poona in 1915, 1918, 1922 and 1926; it was abandoned in 1914 and 1916 and not played in 1930-33; for the rest of the years Bombay was the venue. During this period, the Hindus won the honours six times, the Europeans four times, the Parsis and the Muslims thrice each, the three others being drawn.

For the past several years the Quadrangular Tests, after the lead given by Bombay, have been held in Northern India, the Central Provinces, Gujarat, Karachi, Hyderabad, Calcutta and Madras. Leaving out the Europeans as nation, the three contestants, who represented the different communities in these matches, showed a marked improvement in the game in these centres by producing many first class Hindu, Parsi and Muslim players, none inferior in any way to their Bombay counterparts; in fact, several of the members of the three communities in Bombay were brought there every year from various parts of India for this leading competition.

The competition became Pentangular when the Rest joined in 1937. In 1937, its inaugural year, the Pentangular was actually a Quadrangular, the Hindus having stood out due to a controversy on the question of seats for its members in the newly built Brabourne Stadium.
In 1940 again the Hindus stayed away, largely because Mahatma Gandhi expressed himself publicly against communal sport. The Pentangular could not be played at all in 1942 owing to the extensive campaign by a section of the public against communal cricket.\footnote{Jagdish Chandra Maitra, \textit{Indian Sports Flashback}, (Bombay: Commercial Press, 1965), p.33.}

Ramachandra Guha observed the impact of the role of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian cricket particularly on communal cricket in the following words:

Cricket might not have affected Gandhi, but Gandhi certainly affected cricket. The political movements he led and the social changes he sought to bring about had their consequences on how the game was played in the sub-Continent. Between 1919 and 1923, for instance, he was dragged, willy-nilly, into a remarkable campaign to accord just recognition to a family of Dalit cricketers. These were the Palwankar brothers, the eldest of whom, Palwankar Baloo, was without question India’s first great slow bowler. But, because of his caste, Baloo was never made captain of the Hindu team in the Bombay Quadrangular, the then India’s premier cricket Tournament and in which the other competing teams were the Muslims, the Parsis and the ruling Europeans. The campaign to accord just recognition to the Palwankars got an enormous boost from Gandhi own struggle against the evils of caste. The family’s nationalist supporters took heart from the Mahatma’s claim that swaraj would come about only after we had done away with the pernicious social practice of untouchability. In 1923, Baloo’s younger brother Vithal was made captain of the
Hindus. Palwankar Vithal was a high class batsman according to some who watched both; he was just as good as Vijay Hazare. In the finals of as one patriot who watched that year's quadrangular later wrote ‘the happiest event, the most agreeable upshot of the set of matches was the carrying of Captain Vithal on the shoulders of Hindus belonging to the so called higher castes. Hurrah!, Captain Vithal, Hurrah! Hindus who forget caste prejudice! Mahatma Gandhi Maharaj Kijai'. Gandhi's next intervention with the course of cricket came in the form of his Salt March of 1930. This led, as we know, to countrywide, Civil Disobedience. The city of Bombay was a consequence the Quadrangular was not held between 1930 and 1933. When it resumed, in 1934, it became nationalists. If the Muslims had a separate cricket team, the argument went; did not this provide them a justification for demanding a separate nation? The Gandhians among cricket lovers mounted a sustained campaign against the communal cricket Tournament. Finally, in 1940, they were able to obtain a statement from the Mahatma himself by this time the Tournament had become a Pentangular, with the inclusion of a fifth side simply called the Rest. Gandhi told them that his “sympathies were wholly with those who would like to see these matches stopped”. Gandhi asked the sporting public of Bombay to revise their sporting code and to erase from it communal matches. Sadly, the forces that favoured the continuation of the Pentangular were also strong and well organized. So, despite the Mahatma's opposition, the Tournament was played on until 1946, by which time the creation of Pakistan was a fait accompli. Neither Cricket nor Gandhi could stop it.\(^{39}\)

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\(^{39}\) Ramachandra Guha, "Gandhi and Cricket", The Hindu, 30 September, 2001, Madras Ed., p.III.
Palwankar Baloo was the first Dalit cricketer ever to fight an election in our country. By virtue of his deeds on the cricket field, Baloo had become an honoured and respected leader of the low castes. In September 1932 he acted as a mediator in the Poona Pact, the compromise settlement on Scheduled Caste representation arrived at between Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. In the winter of 1933-34, this stalwart of the Hindu cricket team fought a by-election for a seat in the Bombay Municipality. He lost to a Parsi doctor, Homi F. Pavri. Three years later Baloo was chosen by the Congress to oppose Ambedkar in the elections of 1937. Ambedkar had disavowed the Poona Pact, and was standing on the ticket of his own Scheduled Caste Federation. The seat being contested for was the ‘E’ and ‘F’ wards of Bombay city. To everyone’s surprise, the great cricketer gave the greater lawyer a stiff fight. Baloo obtained 11,225 votes, Ambedkar 13,245.

It was a close-run thing, and would have been closer still had Baloo’s chances not been affected by a Congress rebel who stood as an independent. Had this spoiler withdrawn, claimed one newspaper, then “Dr. Ambedkar would have been positively swamped”. Ten years later India became independent. No cricketer seems to have offered his

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name as a candidate for the first general elections of 1952, nor for the three general elections that followed.\footnote{Ramachandra Guha, “Scoring politically”, The Hindu, 14, October, 2001, p.III.}

In the nine years of the Pentangular contests (1937 – 1945) the Muslims and the Hindus won the honours four times each. This tournament played its part considerably in building up Indian cricket. Though this tournament was played by teams selected on communal basis, it never aroused communal tensions. In Bombay where it was played for 10 days continuously it became a great carnival, and the game was played in a healthy spirit and cheerful rivalry. Its fame and popularity spread to other cricket centres giving them encouragement and inspiration to start such tournaments in their States.

In Madras, additional glamour was added to the Pongal Festival when in 1905 the Presidency matches between the Europeans and the Indians began. The Sind Quadrangular was started in 1916. The Calcutta Cricket Club continued to hold their annual Christmas fixture, to which celebrities were invited to participate. Kathiawar also started the Pranth Quadrangular in 1916 in which the four provinces followed suit and started a quadrangular tournament in Nagpur. Only Delhi, in spite of being the Capital did not show any interest for a long time; finally it
instituted an All India invitation Tournament in 1922 for the Viceroy's Cup, a much coveted trophy.

The Aligarh University fielded a young side and it became a matter of great talk when the University team beat the strong Patiala team at Patiala. By the end of 1923-24, there did not seem to be a single major city where one or other of the tournaments was not played. Cricket had come to stay and the time had come when effective steps had to be taken to build a strong organization.

 Cricket was a colonial game in that it epitomized many of the English, particularly Victorian values such as the concept of team work, fair play and of manliness – all based on the public school model. It was the opinion of Lord Harris that cricket was a peculiar English game which required the doggedness of the English temperament for success on the field.42

Harris also believed that there were some impediments to the progress of the game in India for it was easier for the phlegmatic Anglo-Saxon to bat in a disciplined and scientific manner than what he termed the excitable Asiatic. Indian batsmen of the 19th century also suffered in

the opinion of Harris. Some Indian Cricket writers of late 19th and 20th centuries tacitly accepted the colonial myths about cricket and the notion that Indian players were handicapped by the culture and climate of the country.

A further paradox regarding the appropriation of cricket by Indian society was that there was never any formal policy to promote the game. This is not surprising because the idea of promoting sport and organizing the recreational pursuits of society is a contemporary concept and was not considered or contemplated even by the colonial government or by any other governments of the time. The policy of Anglicization which dated from the Macaulay Minute of 1835 related primarily to cultural integration through education, and aimed to create English educated Indians who would become English in manners, tastes and outlook. This policy was implemented formally with the establishment of English medium universities from the mid 19th century which quickly became popular because they were the avenues to the more prestigious professional and bureaucratic positions.

The promotion of the game of cricket was a more informal and indirect process since it was not form part of the state policy of the government. Its advance depended on the enthusiasm and support of
individual Englishmen at every level of the Raj. They were assisted by a
group of professional cricketers who came out to India as coaches but they played a lesser role than the colonial patrons of cricket who were not paid for their efforts on behalf of the game.

There was an adhoc character to the colonial patronage of cricket since it rested on the private interests of individuals rather than on any public policy which would have guaranteed some continuity. It was common for officials to move from one post to another; hence there was never any certainty that the informal policy of one official would be pursued by his successor. It is a matter surprise that the ad hoc policy of informal patronage of cricket did develop continuity and momentum became a de facto official policy of the government in certain areas. There can be no better illustration of this fact than the support which a succession of Bombay Governors accorded to the game.

Lord Willingdon (1913-18) who like Harris was a President of the MCC and who did much to promote cricket in Bombay and later in Delhi when he was Viceroy (1931-36). Leslie Wilson (1923-37) who worked for Indian cricket in Bombay as well as in England where he

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helped in the arrangements for the 1932 tour, and Lord Brabourne (1934-37) whose name was associated with a stadium in Bombay because he helped the Cricket Club of India to acquire the Land is a few names worth mentioning. Then there were many others who took a keen interest in the progress of cricket such as Lord Sandhrust (1895-1900). It was not unusual for the First Governor, Raja Maharaj Singh, who took office after Independence, was a Sporting Governor who appeared in a festival match, even though he was in his seventies; the fact that he shows love of cricket recruited the Test Cricketer Rusi Modi, as his aide-de-camp. A later Governor of Bombay was Dr.P. Subbaroyan (1962) who was President of the Board of Control for Cricket from 1938-46.

The continuity of cricket in India is a reflection of the extensive support extended to the game at every level of the Raj. While the patronage of Viceroy, Governors and the Princes was more evident, the support of lesser officials, army officers, businessmen, college teachers, journalists and even clerics was just as vital.

44 Ibid., p.106.
47 Board of Control for Cricket in India, Golden Jubilee Commemoration Volume 1929-79, p.57.
the support of lesser officials, army officers, businessmen, college teachers, journalists and even clerics was just as vital.

While the Governors began new tournaments, provided funds for stadium and pavilions, and helped to set up the institutional structure of cricket, junior officials were the ones who employed cricketers and gave them special privileges in terms of leaves and other concessions; teachers turned many colleges into cricket nurseries; and journalists gave cricket extensive coverage and made it the most favoured sport in the English language press. The social background of Englishmen in India was one reason why cricket was patronized to a much greater extent than any other English sport. The great majority of civilians, army personnel and businessmen were the products of the public schools which for some years challenged cricket's position in England as the most popular spectator sport. Cricket was preferred because it was more of a middle class sport than soccer which had strong links with the working class. Hence cricket received greater encouragement than soccer from the colonial rulers.

There were some Governors who advocated that cricket tournaments should be played on communal lines because it fitted with
their concept of Indian society and with their notion of the best way to advance cricket. Other officials regarded the association of cricket with communal institutions as anathema because they believed that cricket should play a more liberal role in colonial society. While all shared the belief that cricket would be of benefit to Indian society, there were different view concerning the rationale of and returns from the patronage of cricket. Consequently it is worthwhile to some of the principal British patrons, those who were sufficiently important to leave some records behind, in order to examine the variety of patronage as part of an exploration of the meaning of cricket in the colonial context.

One of the first and most notable patrons was Lord Harris (1851-1932). He came from a family with a long association with India and cricket for hundred and fifty years; his father was the President of the Kent Country Cricket Club. By the time of his appointment as Governor of Bombay in 1890 he was already a formidable figure in the cricket world.

Harris was elected to the committee of the MCC in 1875 and became a trustee in 1885. He was a member of the MCC team which toured Canada in 1872 and he himself led a predominantly amateur

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team to Australia in 1878-79. One of the games played at Sydney was marred by a riot in which Harris was struck on the head by a spectator; as a result, the next Australian team to England led by Murdoch in 1880 found it difficult to secure opponents although Harris eventually relented and captained England in the only test played that year. He also captained England in two Tests in 1884.49

He should be remembered in India as the initiator of an annual contest between the Presidency and the Parsis which began in 1892 and later developed into Bombay’s Communal Tournament. This was a significant innovation because; up to this time Cricket has been looked upon by most Indians as one of the inexplicable diversions of the Englishmen.

The incentive of playing against the best European teams of the day and of defeating the colonial masters at their own game set in motion the first stirrings of an Indian Nationalism on the sporting field which helped to transform cricket into a more popular game. It was common for newspapers of the day to refer to the clash between the Presidency and the Parsis as a “Great International Contest” which underlined the significance of this Annual Tournament.

A second contribution of Harris was that he helped to organize the tour to India of an English Team, led by Lord Hawke, in 1892-93 to assist materially with the Indian arrangements.\textsuperscript{50} Another contribution of Lord Harris to Indian Cricket was to promote the construction of ovals and turf wickets and to assemble the nucleus of a strong European Team which helped to raise the standard of Cricket in Western India. He set an example by laying down a fine wicket at Ganeshkand, in Poona, seat of the Bombay Government which was carried out under the supervision of his Military, Secretary Colonel Frank Rhodes who was also a leading cricketer of Bombay.\textsuperscript{51}

It was during the Governorship of Lord Harris that sites were set aside on the sea-front in Back Bay for the Parsi, Hindu and Muslim Cricket Teams; this action put the Indian Teams on parity with the European Club, the Bombay Gymkhana which had its own oval for some time. Harris also organized a Government House XI which played a full schedule of matches from June to October of each year. The results of the 13 matches played in 1892 were recorded in Wisden of

\textsuperscript{50} Ramachandra Guha, \textit{A Corner of a Foreign Field}, p.65.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ibid.}, p.67.
1893 and represented a rare 19th century entry in Wisden under the heading of “Cricket in India”.

The inclusion of the matches of the Governor-led team in Wisden and the exclusion of the results of the matches of Indian teams would appear to represent another example of a colonial mentality in Indian Cricket but this report, which was sent to Wisden by Harris himself, does not merit such a description.

Harris did not play cricket outside Ganeshkind or against the Parsis in the Bombay Tournament because he believed that decisions made against or in favour of the first officer of the Government could be misinterpreted by the crowd. But there were no such restrictions on the members of his team who provided the nucleus of a strong European eleven in the Bombay contest.

One such player was R.N. Poore, who was aid-de-camp to Harris from 1892-95. Poore did not take cricket very seriously until he went to India as a lieutenant in the 7th Hussars; he then began to study text books on the game and played in some army matches. Presumably he

52 J.D. Coldham, Lord Harris (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982).
53 Ramachandra Guha, A Corner of a Foreign Field, p.5.
advanced in cricket more after his transfer to Bombay where the
benefited from the experience of playing with Lord Harris.

An even greater influence was exerted on Bombay and Poona
Cricket by another Member of the Military, Lieutenant Colonel J.G.
Greig, known as Jungly who was posted a Collabra in the early 1890s. He became the Private Secretary to Lord Harris and was on the staff of
the successive Governors until 1921. It was Grieg who is said to have
spotted P. Baloo and to have proclaimed him to the world as a bowler
of great potential. Baloo, one of the four Palwankar brothers who
came from a grounds man earning only three rupees per month. The
support of a player of the status of Grieg must have contributed to the
emergence of Baloo as a Cricketer, who was a member of the 1911
tour and the Skipper of Hindu Gymkhana side.

The presence of English players of country standard in Bombay
in the 1890s must have improved the quality of Cricket there.

Not all the European players of the 1890 were made of the
Military. M.R. Jardine, born at Simla in 1869 returned to India after legal

\[\text{\footnotesize 54} \text{ Richard Cashman, } \textit{Patrons, Players and the Crowd, The Phenomenon of Indian Cricket, p.26.} \]
\[\text{\footnotesize 55} \text{ Ibid., p.89.} \]
D.R. Jardine: Captain of M.C.C. Team to India 1933-34
studies in England to practice at Bombay bar in the 1890s and rose to become Advocate General of Bombay. Jardine had made a considerable impression as a cricketer at Oxford as he was one of the few players elected to the membership of the M.C.C. while still an undergraduate. He is better known as the father.

Another player of the 1890s though not a member of the Bombay European XI was of D.R. Jardine who was born at Malabar Hill, Bombay at the time of Diwali and returned to India to lead the fair official English Team in 1933-34. Jardine was one of the best English test player born in India, the rest includes M.C. Cowdrey, R. Woolmer and J. Jameson E.H.D. Sewell who represented an All-India XI against Lord Hawker's team at Allahabad. Born in India, where his father was an army officer, he had been educated in England, returned in 1892 and remained in India until 1900.

E.H.D. Sewell contributed more to the game as a profile writer of books and as a journalist who reported extensively on Indian Cricket for more than three decades. Until his death in 1947, he wrote numerous articles on Indian Cricket chiefly for the English Public. He served in the Indian Civil service and resigned his post. As an all-rounder in the

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57 Edward Docker, *History of Indian Cricket*, p.56.
58 *The Times of India*, Bombay, 12th July 1932.
game of cricket, he also performed a number of feats in minor matches all over India.\textsuperscript{59}

One of the more significant English patrons of Cricket was Lord Willingdon who was Governor of Bombay (1913-18) and Madras (1918-24) and was Viceroy (1931-36).\textsuperscript{60} When he was Governor of Bombay, Willingdon organized an important match in aid of war funds between the Governor XI and an India XI.\textsuperscript{61} A more significant feature of his work there was the establishment of the Willingdon Sports Club in Bombay and the Willingdon Club, both of which were for European and Indian Association in hours of relaxation.

As a former Liberal Member of Parliament, unlike many other cricket patrons who were from Conservative Party ranks, Willingdon was more in tune with certain aspects of the burgeoning Indian national consciousness than most Englishmen in India of the time.

When Willingdon returned to India as Viceroy in 1931, had broader cricket ambitions than most officials. As a past President of the M.C.C. he wished to oversee India's entrance into the International

\textsuperscript{60} B.B. Mishra, The Bureaucracy in India, An Historical Analysis of Development up to 1947, p.45.
\textsuperscript{61} Edward Docker, History of Indian Cricket, pp.59-60.
Cricket Arena, to assist the emerging national cricket infrastructure and to build up the game in Delhi, seat of vice regal influence. According to A.S. de Mello, Willingdon took seriously his role as the patron of the Indian Board of Cricket Control and sought to spread the gospel of the game which he loved, arranged from all parts of India and did not much to remedy the lack of a national competition.

When he was Governor of Madras he played a significant and skillful political role, from the British viewpoint, in making the 1919 reforms work by materially helping the justice party to form the government there. Willingdon’s attempt to bring a liberal perspective to add the weight of vice regal support to the World of Indian Cricket was notably less successful because his attempt to play a creative role there led to an enlargement in the factional struggles of rival princely houses.

From the time of his arrival in Delhi, Willingdon was courted by the Maharajkumar of Vizianagaram, one of the princely contenders in the complicated world of cricket politics of the time. Vizzy, as he was known from 1936, was seen at the Vice regal Lodge, donated the Willingdon pavilion at Delhi and the Willingdon Gold Cup and
attempted to have the national trophy's name after Willingdon. It became the Ranji Trophy instead.  

Lord Brabourne, Governor of Bombay (1936-37) and Bengal (1937-39), until his death at 43, ranked with Lord Harris and Willingdon, as one of the major English patrons of Indian Cricket. Lord Brabourne is best remembered as the Governor who made it possible for the Cricket Club of India to purchase 88,000 square yards of choice and expensive land which was part of the Back Bay Reclamation scheme at the nominal rate of one guinea per square yard. As chairman of the Bombay Committee of the Cricket Club of India, Brabourne was associated with all the details of construction, the ground appointments and fund raising.

Lord Brabourne was one Governor who made his mark as a cricket patron and a skilful and tactful executive who was respected and liked by the cricket fraternity, congress politician and those of major parties. He developed close and cordial relations with B.G. Kher, the first Chief Minister under the new act, and materially assisted the congress ministry when it first took office. He was equally skilful in his

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handling of industrial disputes and set up machinery of conciliation to deal with worker grievances against their employers.\textsuperscript{63}

There were many other Viceroys and Governors who had some experience in cricket. Though they played a lesser role to that of Brabourne, Willingdon and Parries, they did help to maintain continuity of cricket patronage.

Madras, like Bombay also had a relation of cricketing Governors. The career of Lord Wenlock who was Governor of Madras at the time as Harris was Governor of Bombay, ran parallel to Harris in several respects.\textsuperscript{64} He was a keen supporter of the game in Madras and especially of the Madras Cricket Club. He was the host of Lord Hawke during his visit to Madras.\textsuperscript{65} It also important to mention here that he had been the President of the Marylebourne Cricket club later in 1885.\textsuperscript{66}

The contribution of Indian Princes in promoting and patronizing the game in and outside their states cannot be underrated. The house of Patiala which had taken keen interest in the game right from 1890. Maharaja Rajendra Singh not only built Cricket ovals in Patiala and

\textsuperscript{63} Ramachandra Guha, \textit{A Corner of a Foreign Field}, p.239.
\textsuperscript{64} \textit{Harris to Wenlock}, letter of 5 January, p.189.
\textsuperscript{65} Irving Rosenwater, "Some Englishmen in Madras", 120\textsuperscript{th} year commemorative Volume of Madras Cricket Association (1848 - 1968), p.19.
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Ibid.}, p.20.
Chail, but also invited Brockwell and Hearne from England to Coach Indian Cricketers.\(^{67}\) His Successor Raja Bhupinder Singh continued to patronize the game. He led the Indian Team that toured England in 1911\(^{68}\) and earned the acclaim of persons like C.B. Fry. Maharaja Nripendra Narayan of Cooch-Behar brought from England two professionals—George Cox and Frank Tarrant, to coach and play for his teams in Calcutta and Darjeeling.\(^{69}\) The Jamsaheb of Nawanagar took his teams from place to place for competitive games. The competition for the Roshanara Trophy attracted other Princes too, such as Maharaja Pratap Sinharl Gaekwad of Baroda, the Nawab of Bhopal and the Maharaja of Kashmir.\(^{70}\)

Along with the name of the Patiala Princes name that stands out prominently is that of Maharaj Kumar Anand of Vizianagaram. He was popularly called “Vizzy”. He collected the best of players from all over the country and invited Hobbs and Sutcliffe, the reputed English opening pair to join his team and took his Team to various centers. It was at his instance that playing of cricket was introduced in Mysore, Bangalore and the Southern part of the country.

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\(^{67}\) Framji Patel, *Stray Thought on Indian Cricket*, pp.67-68.


Raja Dhanraj Girji of Hyderabad who spent lavishly on Cricketers invited players like C.K. Nayudu and young aspirants like Mushtaq Ali to play for his team in the Tournament. Osmania University boys were lucky to have the services of Bill Hitch, the English pace bowler, under whose vigilant eyes the young band, which included E.B. Aibara, learnt the rudiments of the game.\(^1\)

The M.A.O. College at Aligarh also contributed a great deal to Indian cricket as cricket was fostered in this institution for many years and a few of the Aligarh men did well and three of them were the members of the Patiala side to England in 1911.\(^2\)

It was expected in the Cricket circle that Prince Ranjit Singh or his illustrated nephew, Prince Duleep Singh, might do something in forming an organization, but that was not to be.

Although they made the cricketing world realize how good an Indian Cricketer could be and were keener to play to England, they never encouraged the efforts being made by other in India and in England to create a national organization which alone would accord India and Indian Cricketers International status and recognition.

\(^1\) op.cit., pp.76-89.
\(^2\) P. Subbaroyan "Indian Cricket in Retrospect" *The Board of Control For Cricket in India 1928 - 55*, published by BCCI, p.33.
However, the fact is that Indian Cricket had created an impressive image and an indelible impact on the art of the game. C.K. Nayudu, Deodhar, Amar Singh, Nissar, Jai, Mistry, Wasir Ali, and his brother Nazir Ali, Colah, palia, Nowle and Naomal had effectively established that they have powers to reckon with. The day had gone when Indian Cricket was dominated by English players and a strong Indian XI composed of all Indian players at that time ready to face any challenge and meet it with determination and skill.

The credit of an established federation to control the game should go to Maharaja Bhupindhra Singh of Patiala and R.E. Grant Govan. Antony S. de Mello amidst his gubernatorial duties found time to observe Indian Cricket and was highly impressed by its quality and rich potential. During a banquet speech, he said, “There are in India many antipathetic influences at work which serve to keep apart the races of east and west who find themselves neighbors in India. Let Cricket be the exception, let its Sympathetic influence tend to bind them together and let us show that Cricket is doing something to unite the two races. Probably then you will be able to claim that you added another gem to
the brilliant diadem which crown the Queen of Nations. Gentlemen, I give you, Cricket." 73

Calcutta Cricket Club which by then had assumed significant importance was planning to invite a team from England for yet another tour of India. To finalise the arrangements, the Club sent its then secretary M. Robertson to England along with another Club representative William Currie a prominent Calcutta businessman and a great patron of sport to hold talks with English authorities. 74

It is also to mention that Lord Harris was Chairman of the Imperial Cricket Conference (ICC) at the age of seventy eight at that time and as a very special case he allowed the two delegates – Robertson and William Currie to attend the ICC as Representative of India. 75

This was an unusual decision as the Calcutta Cricket Club was not the governing body Controlling Cricket in India. Representation at the ICC was usually given only to recognized governing bodies and India had not yet even formed such a body so far.

75 Golden Jubilee Souvenir of Cricket Association of Bengal (1930-1980).
The Two delegates attended the meetings of ICC, the first held at Lord's on 31st May 1926 and the next at Oval on 28th July 1926. As a result of the deliberations, the M.C.C. agreed to send an English Team to tour India in 1926-27 and appointed Arthur Gilligan to lead the team. So this development helped to create an atmosphere and an urge to form a central federation for Cricket in India.

When the match was played between the visiting team under Arthur Gilligan and Delhi, Roshanara Club, Maharaja Bhupindra Singh of Patiala, R.E. Grant Govan, Arthur Gilligan and A.S. de Mello discussed the procedures about the formation of a Board of Cricket on India. Gilligan also promised to state the Indian Cricket that had reached a stage in its development where it could challenge the world.

Though the idea of forming the Board germinated in 1927, nothing happened positively in this regard for a considerable time as the Calcutta Cricket Club, the strong and powerful group in Delhi with Patiala and the Quadrangular Committees at Bombay continued to act independently. Another reason for delay was the Zonal jealousy and everyone wanted to have the honor of begin called the chief promoter.

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everyone wanted to have the honor of begin called the chief promoter of the governing body. The Shady activates indulged in by self-centered person in Calcutta, Delhi and Bombay also stood in the way of a united effort.

The first public expression to the urgent need to establish a Central Cricket Board for India was seen in an open letter to Leslie Wilson, the then Governor of Bombay Presidency. The letter was published in the newspapers The Herald, and The Indian Daily Mail on 7th February 1927. The author of this letter, J.S. Spencer of the Bombay Gymkhana wrote the letter under the pseudonym Urbs Prima in Cricket in which, he expressed that the time had now definitely come for the establishment of a Central Cricket Board of India as an Official Cricket body invested with the control and management of all affairs relating to Indian Cricket. He also mentioned that a cricket had been played by many nationalist in India; Central Cricket Board for India could be accepted as a representative Cosmopolitan Committee of all nationalities playing Cricket in this country. He also viewed that the most suitable place of location of the governing body should be Bombay for it had Cosmopolitan Gymkhanas, the parent institutions of the Gymkhanas all

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over India representing the four great communities in India, viz. Europeans, Parsis, Hindus and Mohammedans and he did not prefer Calcutta as it had been the centre of European cricket.

He stressed that the establishment of such a Board was an urgent need in view of the fact that within a year or two an Indian Team will have to be sent to England.

In a letter addressed to the Cricket Secretary of the Parsi Gymkhana, he admitted to have written a communication to the Governor on the subject of forming a Central Cricket Board revealing his displeasure against Calcutta in the following words, “Do not let the establishment of this Board pass into the insolent hands of Calcutta”.

He asked the Indian Gymkhana to oppose if any move was made by Calcutta in this respect and reminded how Vithal, Naidu and Jamshedji were instituted in Calcutta during the MCC match. He was of the strong opinion that Bombay should not come under the thumb of Calcutta in matters of Cricket. He exalted that all the Indian Gymkhanas must combine and act immediately in consultation with the Bombay Gymkhana.

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79 Ibid., pp.107-108.
A more specific reaction to the letter came from Dorabji J. Tata. In a letter dated 6th March 1927 addressed to D.B. Lam of Parsi Gymkhana, Dorabji wrote very frankly that he was afraid the views put in his letter did not appeal to him anyway and the remarks about insult to Indian Cricketers and the dubbing of the Calcutta Club as an insolent body of Europeans were very ill-conceived. He added that he did not attach any importance to any remarks made by an irresponsible person and it was absurd to start with the suggestion that Bombay alone should take the lead in the matter. He also observed that unless every province was represented, the Committee could never be called and recognized as central.80

On 22nd July 1927, the Parsi Gymkhana sent out a printed circular on behalf of the Bombay quadrangular Committee to various clubs, gymkhanas and some princes, asking them to express their views and suggestions on the proposals contained in the circular about the measures to be taken to constitute a Central Board in Bombay.81

The circular was sent to the Princes of Patiala, Jamnagar, Porbandar, Indore and Bhopal, the Calcutta Cricket Club, the European

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80 op. cit., p.108.
81 Edward Docker, History of Indian Cricket, p.23.
Club and the Parsi Institute of Karachi, C.P. and Berar Cricket Club of Nagpur. U.P. Club, Allahabad, European Gymkhana, Lahore, Madras United Club and Madras Cricket Club of Madras, Aligarh College gymkhana, Army Sports Central Boards, Ceylon Cricket Association and Grant Govan of the Roshanara Club, Delhi. The proposals mentioned in the letter are as follows:

1) A Central Control Board of Cricket in India should be formed so that in future Tours to and from other Countries will be organized.

2) The Board should be constituted by
   a. Local representatives of each Community in Bombay.
   b. Indian Maharajas interested in Cricket.
   c. Representatives from all provinces and centres where a lot of cricket is played.

It is interesting to note that the Governor of Bombay merely acknowledged the letter on 25th July 1927. The Nawab of Bhopal's Secretary replied on 3rd August stating that to quote, "His Highness has no comments to offer". 

The Madras United Club sent their reply on 28th July agreeing to the proposals entirely.

The CP and Pear Committee wrote on 19th August intimating that committee agreed with the main idea of the proposals and promised to

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"Consider the question of supporting it, when the details including the probable cost to each province are known".83

The replies received from the Maharaja of Patiala and the Calcutta Cricket Club which were very significant. They made certain counter proposals saying the formation of a Board was of imminent importance. In the opinion of Maharaja of Patiala, though Bombay being the home of Indian Cricket it could not be the headquarters as it was not centrally situated and so he suggested Delhi as the most suitable place.

The Cricket Club of Calcutta sent a communication to the all concerned on 30th August 1927 proposing that "Bombay was the place for the permanent location of the Honorary or the paid Secretary of Board".84 It also made the following on the constitution of the Board.

"The Board should be a small body whose duties would be those of policy and governance. It should be constituted by:-

1. The Honorary Secretaries of Local Committee chosen at Bombay, Calcutta, Lahore and Madras.
2. The Honorary Secretary, Army Sports Control Board.
3. The Honorary Secretary, Ceylon Cricket Association.

83 Edward Docker, History of Indian Cricket, pp.26-27.
The Madras Cricket Club took a little longer time to respond as they had not received the original circular. On receipt of the duplicate copy and the reply sent by Calcutta Club, they expressed their approval with the proposal sent by the Calcutta Cricket Club both in regard to the location of the head quarters and the constitution of Board.\textsuperscript{85}

While the Ceylon Association rightly decided to offer full cooperation to the Indian Board, the Karachi Cricket Club sent a reply on 28\textsuperscript{th} November 1927 giving their views in great detail on the constitution, functions and finance of the proposed Indian Board.\textsuperscript{86}

It is known from the replies from the different quarters that everyone was in full agreement that the Indian Cricket Control Board should be formed. The lead in that direction was once again taken by Grant Govan by his reply dated 2\textsuperscript{nd} September 1927 to the Quadrangular Committee's circular and also through his reminder dated 20\textsuperscript{th} September 1927. Quadrangular committee had agreed to convene a meeting in Delhi in the month of November 1927 to consider the formation of the Board. The Maharajas of Patiala and Nawanagar had accepted to attend the meeting. In the month of December, a similar


\textsuperscript{86} \textit{op.cit.}, p.109.
meeting was also arranged during the Bombay Quadrangular matches in Bombay.

To quote Grant Govan from his letter “while the proposed meeting in Delhi may not be as representative as desired, it felt that a meeting in Bombay would also lack full representation from India and it is felt therefore it is desirable to proceed with the convening of our meeting. Possibly the best way of reaching a most representative gathering would be for the proceedings of the Delhi meeting to the placed before the meeting you propose to hold in Bombay when any decisions arrived at Delhi could be considered by your meeting.” ^87

The procedure suggested by Grant Govan was accepted by all at that time. The proposed meeting at Delhi was held at the Roshanara Club on 21st November 1927, about 45 representative attended the meeting including the Maharaja of Patiala, the Nawab of Bhopal, Khan Bahadur Liaqat Hayat Khan, L.P. Jai, R.E. Grant Govan, A.S. de Mello, F.A. Tarrant, G.N.R. Morgan of Karachi, W.N. Ghorpade of Baroda and others representing various clubs and gymkhanas specially from the northern and central parts of the country. The meeting was presided

^87 op.cit.,p.110.
over by the Maharaja of Patiala did not have any representative from the Quadrangular Committee. The meeting was as significant as it took a definite and possible step to form a Central Board, which became evident from the following resolution it passed unanimously.

This meeting of representative of Cricket from Sind, Punjab, Patiala, Delhi, United Provinces, Rajputana, Alwar, Bhopal, Gwalior, Baroda, Kathiawar and Central India approved of the formation of a Board of Cricket Control in

India for the following purposes:

1. To advance and Control the game of Cricket throughout India.
2. To arrange and control Inter-territorial, foreign and other Cricket matches.
3. To make arrangements incidental to visits to Teams to India and to manage and control All-India representative teams playing within or outside India to control and organize all or some inter-territorial matches.
4. To settle disputes or differences between Associations affiliated to the Board and appeals referred to it by any such Association.
5. To adopt if desirable all rules or amendments passed by the Marylebone Cricket Club.\(^{88}\)

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\(^{88}\) *op. cit.*, p.110.
This meeting recommended that such a Board should consist of representative from all major Cricket Associations in territorial areas and strongly urged the immediate formation of such Associations. Until such time when at least ten such Associations are formed and nominate their representatives to the Board, a Provisional Committee should be elected to constitute and conduct the business of the Control Board. Such Provisional Committee is to consist of one representative from each existing Quadrangular Committee and one nominee of each major Cricket Association formed in territorial area as soon as such Association is approved by the Provisional Committee of Board of Cricket Control.

If and when there are at least ten such Associations with nominees on the Board, when the representatives from each of the existing Quadrangular Committee will cease to hold office on the Board and the Provisional Committee will then become the official Board of Cricket Control.\(^9\)

This meeting also considered the suggestion that the headquarters of the Board of Cricket Control should be located in Delhi and that

provision should be made for the holding of Committee meetings at different centres during important Cricket fixtures as it may be most convenient to the Members of the Board.

On 10th December 1927, the Bombay Quadrangular Committee convened a meeting in Bombay to which R.E. Grant Govan, an ambitious Delhi based businessman was also invited from Delhi. The following decisions were taken in the meeting.

1. The meeting unanimously agreed that Provisional Board of Control be formed to represent Cricket in India.

2. The functions of this Board would be those of policy and governance only

A resolution passed in the meeting instructed Provincial Board to encourage formation of territorial Cricket Associations and stated that as soon as eight representatives have been nominated by the newly created associations the original members of the Provisional Board will automatically cease to hold office and the Board will then consist of the representatives of the Associations formed. It also passed a resolution appointing W.J. Cullen and J.E. Macdonell to act temporarily as joint Secretaries of the Board.90

In spite of some hectic efforts made during the second half of 1927, progress was very slow. Grant Govan and de Mello were in London holding vital discussions for the entry of India to the ICC. On their return to India, they were dismayed to see that nothing had happened. The Southern Punjab Cricket Association, the Cricket Associations of Bengal and Assam, Madras Cricket Association and Northern India Cricket Association had been formed. So, two more Associations were still needed for the formation of a representative Board. An attempt was made at that time to form an Association under the name of Bombay Presidency Cricket Association.

The Provisional Board decided to meet at the time of Quadrangular Tournament in Bombay. The meeting was not attended by Bengal. Kanga attended as the representative of Bombay. With the compelling influence of Grant Govan and de Mello who had their sight fixed on possible tour of South Africa to India and India to England in 1929 and 1931 respectively, the Provisional Board stood retired and the real representative Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) was constituted with Grant Govan as the founder President and his personal Secretay in his business Antory S. de Mello, born in Karachi in 1898,
studied in England and returned to become a boxwallah in Delhi, as the founder Honorary Secretary in the month of December 1928.\textsuperscript{91}

In the second chapter, the origin and growth of cricket in Tamil Nadu and the circumstances that led to formation of the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association and contribution of the important personalities are studied.