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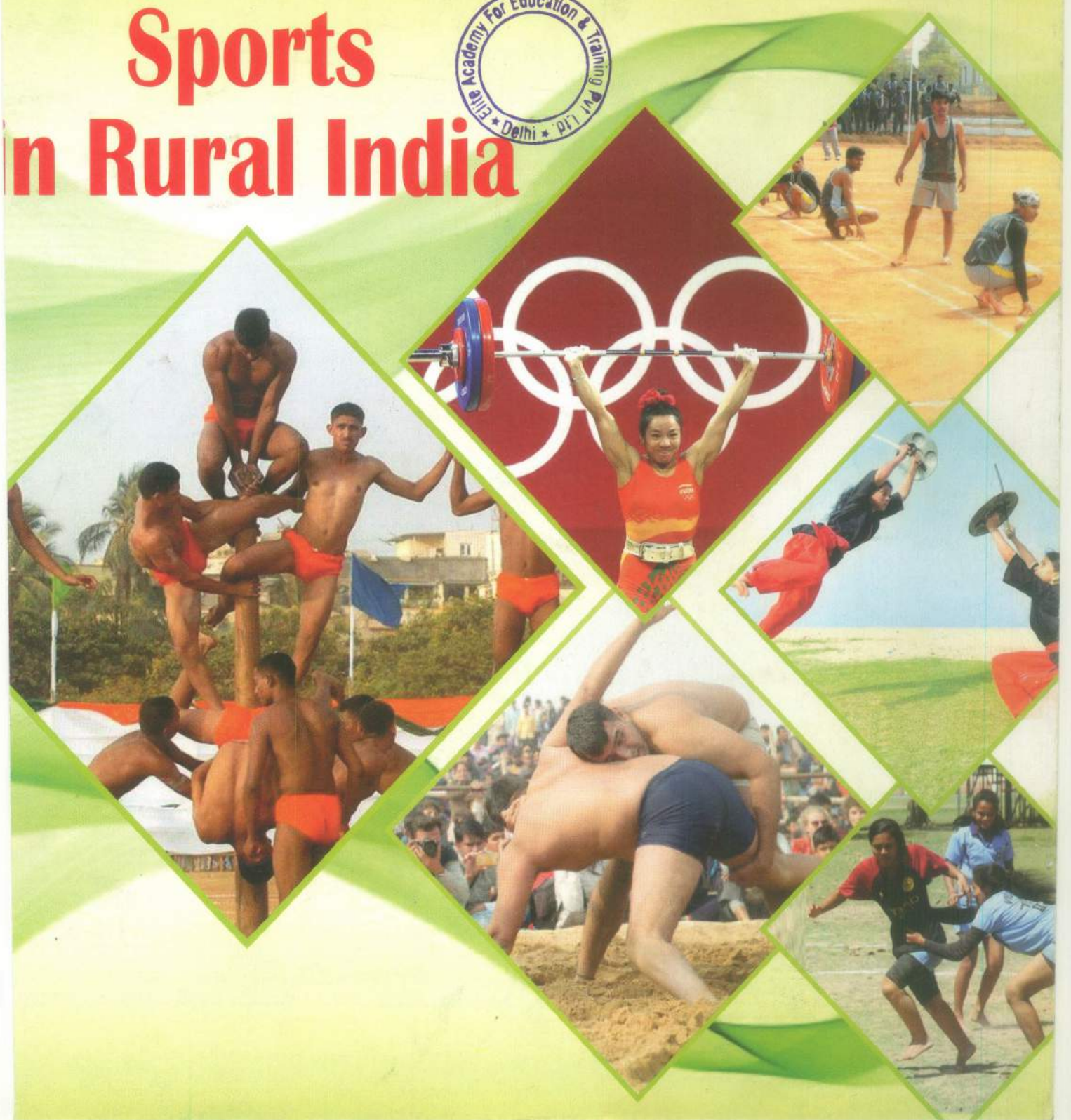
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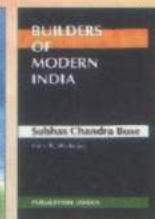
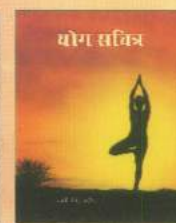
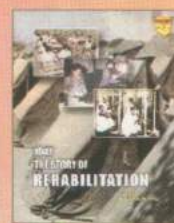
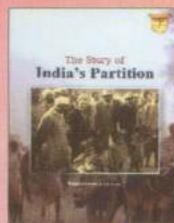
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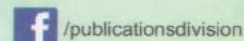
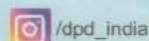
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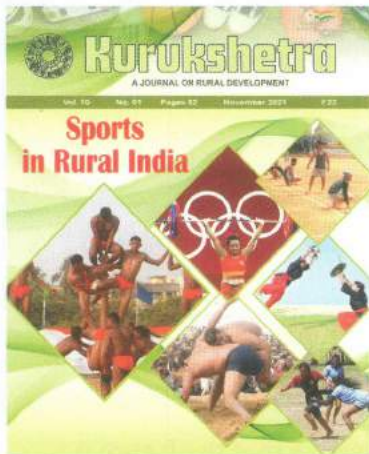
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EDITORIAL

The performance of Indian athletes in the recently concluded Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics was remarkable. It will continue to inspire sportspersons and the young athletes to perform better in future as well. In this issue of Kurukshetra, we have focused on the talent that thrives in rural India as well as schemes and programs started by the Government of India to promote sports and encourage sportspersons to constantly work to improve their performances.

The developments in the sports industry are indicative that the future is promising for sports across the globe and particularly in India. The increasing participation of both rural and urban population in the sport activities has led to the increasing infrastructure building across the country, with programs like “Khelo India”, focusing on both rural and urban population.

According to our lead article, the National Education Policy 2020 offers a window of opportunity to integrate sports as a non-alienable part of the curriculum in schools and colleges. The network of schools and colleges makes a perfect platform to scale sports to reach each household. The article argues that with an initiative like One State One Sport, both scale and future champions can be created. It has also discussed about the powerful emergence of the women athletes and their performance in the Tokyo Olympics.

Another article titled as *Women Participation in Sports* talks about the changing sports scenario for women since P.T. Usha emerged on the sports era as one of the greatest athlete the country has ever produced. Her magical performances drew the attention of not only the citizens, but of media and the Government as well.

An article titled as *Rural India: Sporting Optimism and Hope* mentions that sports sector has undergone an immense transformation, with series of initiatives by the government in form of “Khelo India” to improve the sports infrastructure across the country. The private sector has been playing an important role as well by organising leagues and tournaments, and scouting and sponsoring talented sportspersons at the grassroots level.

The tradition of sports is deeply rooted in the Indian culture dating a few millennia back. Over the years, India has emerged as a major force to reckon with in the international arena. Sports in our country is in the process of development. To accelerate this rate of development, holistic approach should be adopted. Efforts should be made in developing infrastructure, identifying sports talents, organising regular sports events, and generating awareness at the grassroots level.

We wish our readers a very happy festive season ahead . Keep reading our journal for informative articles.

Happy reading and stay safe.

Reinvigorating Sports in Rural Areas

Dr. Prem Singh and Piyush Prakash



The recent success of India at the Olympics is a commendable achievement – with many firsts added to the kitty. The athletes from rural India remain the heroes of this success. Many of these sports find their roots in the ancient Indian tradition of sports. In recent times, the Government of India and State governments have taken multiple initiatives to groom athletes for professional sports. However, there is a long way before India emerges as a sporting nation in its truest sense. Sports have to be a part of a child while growing up. The National Education Policy 2020 offers a window of opportunity to integrate sports as a non-alienable part of the curriculum in schools and colleges. The network of schools and colleges makes a perfect platform to scale sports to reach each household. The article argues that with an initiative like One State One Sport, both scale and future champions can be created.

Tokyo Olympics has been historic for India – an event that will be cherished forever. Many ‘firsts’ were achieved, and medal droughts ended – India bagged its highest ever medals (7), Neeraj Chopra brought India its first gold in athletics in men’s javelin; India ended a 41-year medal drought in hockey by winning a bronze. While Meera Bai Chanu lifted a billion Indian hopes with a silver medal at the Olympics, she also gave India’s first-ever opening day medal at the Olympics. Ravi Dahiya, Bajrang Punia, and Lovlina Borgohain wrestled and boxed out to win a silver and two bronzes at Tokyo Olympics. A common thread that binds these athletes—apart from their spirit of excellence and service to the nation – is their rural background. It’s a testimony to the fact that rural India has been a powerhouse of extraordinary talent. Rural India is abundant with sports and games which are local and unique in each state. These games and sports have served multiple purposes – keeping people fit, maintaining harmony, channelising the youth’s

energy in constructive areas, keeping them away from substance abuse, and pulling the youth out of poverty, among many other benefits. The Government of India, in recent years, has taken several initiatives such as Khelo India, TOPS Scheme, etc to build India as a sporting nation with a great amount of emphasis in the rural areas. While these initiatives are commendable, there is a long way to go in creating a bustling sports culture in India – rural and urban both. In this article, we explore the trajectory of sports in India (with a focus on rural sports and rural India), the intrinsic and extrinsic values of sports, path breaking reforms taken by states and the central government, linkages between education and sports in the light of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and suggest few measures to reinvigorate and institutionalise rural sports through policy measures.

Rural Sports in India: Ancient to Modern

Sports have always been a part of the common life in India for ages. There are several



pieces of evidence of the existence of vibrant sports activities in India. Our epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata are full of incidences of sports such as archery, wrestling, horse-riding, chariot-racing, etc. For instance, wrestling has been a highly popular sport even during the times of Mahabharata. Known as Malla-yuddha, it saw participation from legendary characters such as Bhima, Balram, and Jarasandha – who have been mentioned as the greatest wrestlers in the epic. Today, India is known as a powerhouse in wrestling with several outstanding accolades gained at the international forums – the Commonwealth Games, the world championships, and the Olympics.

One of the greatest things to have happened in the wrestling world is the evolution and growth of female wrestling. This one development has dismantled the concept of females as the fairer sex – often used to denote the fragility and physical weakness of women – and challenged the gender role and occupation for women. The young girls and women from rural India have role models – who are like them, come from similar backgrounds, and overcame challenges to succeed. The legend of the Phogat sisters has changed the outlook of patriarchy, many have become champions of gender equality and promote girls in sports. It is no surprise that a new generation of female sports wrestlers like Sakshi Malik (the first Indian female wrestler to win a medal at the Olympics) have come up, performing exceedingly well at the national and international forums. From ancient times till date, wrestling continues to enthral the youth and has emerged as one of India's strongholds in modern sports times.

It is a great achievement that many of these sports still survive and thrive in India. Some of the other early rural sports which have withstood the tide of time and continue to attract youth from rural areas have been discussed in the following sections.

a. Mallakhamb: The Ultra-Gymnastics

Mallakhamb is an ancient Indian version of gymnastics where a gymnast performs aerial yoga and gymnastic posture atop or with a standing pole. The sport is hugely popular in rural pockets of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, and requires immense stamina, practise, and discipline to perform. One of the earliest written descriptions

of Mallakhamb can be located in the memoirs of the Chinese traveller Huen-Tsang dating seventh century CE. He recognises Prayagraj as a site where Hindu ascetics used to climb poles as a yogic exercise. He states that *Hindu ascetics climbed the top of a pole situated at Prayagraj clinging onto it with one hand and one foot while other hand and foot stretched out in the air and watched the sunset with their heads turned right as it set which indicates a solar rite*¹. In modern times, the sport of Mallakhamb was formally institutionalised in the year 1958 when it was introduced as a sport in the National Gymnastics Championship followed by the first National Mallakhamb Championship in 1962 at Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. From there on the sports has grown in its reach and appeal so much so that the State Government of Madhya Pradesh declared Mallakhamb as the State sports in 2013. The Mallakhamb World Championship 2019 held in Mumbai attracted participants from 15 countries such as the USA, England, Germany, France, Japan, Singapore, Italy amongst others. Such is the popularity of Mallakhamb that top performers from India were to perform Mallakhamb at the Tokyo Olympics but couldn't do so because of restricted guidelines; it was performed in the Olympics for the first time in the year 1936.

b. Kalaripayattu: The Ancient Indian Martial Arts

Kalaripayattu, or simply Kalari, is an ancient Indian martial arts form that can be traced back to the Sangam period in southern India. A scientific sport, it requires great mind-body coordination and agility using kicks and swings while attacking and protecting with spears, shields, swords, etc. It's a martial arts training used to prepare warriors in ancient times. But today it's practised as a competitive sport and attracts youth mainly from Kerala. It follows a guru-shishya parampara where students (shishya) train under a master (guru) in training centers (called Kalari). Till 1936, the Kalari training continued as an oral instruction (vaytharis), and then it was codified in written form as a book and descriptive writings followed at scale by 1953 leading to the popularisation of the sports. The Kerala Government has established the Kalaripayattu Academy in 2021 which will offer training of Kalari in a formalised way through a dedicated syllabus that has been crafted for the purpose.



c. Qila Raipur Sports Festival: India's Rural Olympics

Qila Raipur Sports Festival, India's Rural Olympics, is an annual sporting event that promotes local rural sports of Punjab through competitions in the district of Ludhiana, Punjab. The brainchild of Inderjeet Singh Grewal, Qila Raipur Sports Festival was first held in 1933 to bring together people and promote harmony through sports. The sports festival brings a right unique mix of professional sports as well as rural sports played for mere pleasure. The athletic events include shot put, hockey, kabaddi, track races. The other games include tug of war, horse races, horse acrobatics, etc. The festival aims at giving a platform for the budding talent in professional games as well as creating a sporting culture in the area. The festival is tied to the culture of the area through folk songs, bhangra and local food which are on full display during the event. It acts as a unifying element and keeps people closer to their roots. These instrumental values of sports are intangible and often get lesser recognition in the noise of professional sports.

In addition to the ancient Indian games, modern India has seen the rise of Indian players at the global level in several other professional sports predominantly played in the rural parts of the country – be it kabaddi, hockey, or archery. There are several outstanding initiatives taken by various State Governments and the Government of India to nurture the sporting talent in rural India as discussed further.

Initiatives to Strengthen Sports in Rural Areas: A Pulse Check

The Government of India (GOI) took a historic step by starting a targeted scheme to achieve top results in the Olympic Games. The Target Olympic Podium Scheme or TOPS was launched in 2014 under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), GOI to provide financial assistance and other help to athletes in their pursuit of medals in the Olympics and other international sporting events. Sports such as archery, badminton, boxing, hockey, shooting, and wrestling have been recognised as 'high priority' sports under the scheme.

The top-performing athletes are selected by a committee who are then provided customised training with top coaches at modern and well-equipped sports facilities and institutions. The contribution of the TOPS scheme in the medal tally in the international forum has been nothing less than a big success. The Rio 2016 Olympics saw TOPS awardees P V Sindhu and Sakshi Malik clinching silver and bronze respectively for India. The paralympians covered under TOPS won four medals at Rio including two gold medals. The TOPS' impact was best to be seen at the 2018 Commonwealth Games where 47 out of the 70 medals won by India were bagged by TOPS awardee athletes.

The Tokyo Olympics has been the greatest Olympics for India in terms of the medals secured. Believe it or not, all the athletes including the

paralympians were covered under the TOPS scheme. In addition to best coaching and equipments, each athlete was provided with Rs. 50,000 monthly out-of-pocket expenditure which could be spent on their diet or training or any other way the athlete desires. The Government of India went the extra mile to support its contingent of paralympians. Avani Lekhara, the double medalist, was provided with a computerised digital target and an expensive air rifle to practice at home while Bhavina Patel, the silver medalist, was equipped with an Ottobock Wheelchair and a Table Tennis robot called Butterfly- Amicus Prime. No wonder, the 47 members Paralympic contingent converted the opportunity provided under the TOPS scheme into golds, silvers, and bronzes – a total of 19 medals for India at the Tokyo Paralympics.

While the TOPS scheme aimed at polishing existing talent for higher results, the Government of India has designed a future-looking scheme to develop a pool of talent from the remotest part of the country through the Khelo India Scheme. Aimed at mainstreaming sports as a tool for national, economic, community, and individual development, the Khelo India scheme was launched in 2018 with 12 verticals.

Under the Khelo India Scheme, talent search has been started at the grassroots level in two categories: a) Sports potential talent identification and b) Proven talent identification. A zonal approach has been taken by the government

in the identification of talent. Grassroot Zonal Talent Identification committees have been formed to scour the remotest part of the country for spotting talent across 20 disciplines in the age group 8 to 14 years, wherein the country has the potential /advantage to excel at the international level.

Under the 'Talent Search and Development' vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, Khelo India Athletes identified and selected under the scheme are provided annual financial assistance of ₹ 6.28 lakh per athlete per annum which includes ₹ 1.20 lakh per annum as Out of Pocket Allowance and ₹ 5.08 lakh for other facilities like coaching, sports science support, diet, equipment, consumables, insurance charges, etc. Further, each Khelo India Centre notified under the Scheme at district levels in various States/Union Territories are eligible to receive ₹ 5 lakh per discipline as a one-time grant and ₹ 5 lakh per discipline as a recurring grant².

Under the scheme, Khelo India Games are organised to provide a platform to the budding talent at the school and university level. Till now, three such games have already been organised and the fourth one is going to be held in Haryana. Seeing the initial impact of the scheme, the Government of India has furnished an Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) memorandum to expand the scheme from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with an estimated budget of ₹ 8,750 crores. While the central government has taken a reform trajectory to transform India into a sporting nation, the



Source: <https://kheloindia.gov.in/about>

role played by the States is equally important to nurture a sports culture.

Case Study: Haryana – The Incubator of Sportstars from Rural India



In the recently completed Tokyo Olympics, Haryana sent the maximum Olympians in the Indian contingent - 31 athletes, which is nearly 25 percent of the total contingent. Three of them brought gold, silver, and bronze medals and many were part of the victorious Indian hockey team. The seeds for Haryana's success were sowed back in the 1980s when Haryana hired coaches for different sports across the State. Though things moved on, the real thrust came with the formulation of a Sports Policy in 2006. The policy laid down the foundations for Haryana's success with a focus on spotting, nurturing, and polishing talent from the state for national and international events.

Today, Haryana has a formal institutional mechanism called 'Play 4 India' under which each student in school is encouraged to take upon sport. With the motto 'catch them young, catch them right', Haryana conducts Sports and Physical Aptitude Test (SPAT) in all the schools across the state to identify the high potential athletes in 8-19 age groups. Participants are administered a battery of standardised tests in three rounds and the qualifiers enter the final round called the Sports and Physical Exercise Evaluation and Development (SPEED) Test where they select a particular game based on their aptitude and counselling. Those who clear the SPEED test are admitted into Sports and Physical Aptitude Continuous Evaluation (SPACE) where they are trained into sports academies³. A monthly stipend of ₹ 1500 and ₹ 2000 per month is awarded to the students in the age group 8-14 years and 15-19 years respectively. In addition, cash rewards for successful athletes right from national champions to Olympians have been given by the Haryana State Government. Haryana's tryst with sports at the school level is an ideal recipe to create a continuous supply of highly talented sportsperson of world-class caliber as well as promoting a sports culture at scale.

National Education Policy 2020: An Opportunity to Transform India as a Sporting Nation

In his inaugural address at the second Khelo

India winter games, the Prime Minister remarked that sports have been given a place of pride in the recent National Education Policy (NEP 2020). An extra-curricular activity, Sports, now will be an integral part of the school and college curriculum with grading in sports counted in the education of the children.

The school education system in India caters to around 26 crore students through a network of 15 lakh schools with ~18 crore enrolments in rural India, thus paving the way for scaling sports across the country. The existing schemes of the Government of India such as the Samagra Shiksha, Eklavya Model Residential Schools, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, etc have a special emphasis on promoting sports in the remotest part of the country. Samagra Shiksha, the flagship scheme of school education in India has components that exclusively focus on providing sports equipment to schools and supporting the Khelo India Scheme.

The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme has set up at least one residential girls school in every educationally backward block of India. The scheme provides access to a high quality holistic education to girls from marginalised communities -- SC, ST, OBC, BPL, and minorities – from class VI-XII in residential mode. Sports is a very important component of the scheme where facilities for sports such as hockey, kabaddi, kho-kho, badminton, volleyball, etc have been developed. Sports meets are conducted to provide a platform to girls to excel in sports.

The Eklavya Model Residential Schools scheme of the government is targeted at providing holistic education to the students from ST category in tribal areas of the country. There is a lot of focus on sports in these schools. Centre of Excellence for Sports (CoE for Sports) has been planned and implemented across Eklavya Model Residential Schools. This Centre of Excellence will have specialised state-of-the-art facilities for one identified individual sport and one group sport in each state with scientific backup along with specialised training, boarding and lodging facilities, sports kit, sports equipments, competition exposure, insurance, medical expenses, etc. as per norms of Sports Authority of India.

It has to be emphasised that sport is a scientific discipline and requires a strategic roadmap to develop future talent and infuse a sporting culture

in India. There are certain sports where Indians have a comparative advantage either because of their genetic build or the prolonged assimilation within certain sports. It might be useful to start a campaign namely One State One Sport, wherein each state government will identify a major sport in which it has a competitive advantage along with other sports which may be accorded a little lesser priority.

Conclusion

The tradition of sports is deeply rooted in the Indian culture dating a few millennia back. Over the years, India has emerged as a major force to reckon with in certain sports in the international arena. However, the sporting culture is limited to few pockets of the country which also happen to be the nursery of athletes in India. Recently, the Government of India has taken many initiatives such as the TOPS, Khelo India, Fit India, etc which has the potential to transform the sports landscape of India. The recent successes at the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, and world championships have been extremely encouraging. Parents and

youngsters are increasingly looking at sports as a career in the country. Right now, we are at the inflection point of a vibrant sporting culture in India which is only to rise steeply when the support and ecosystem building done by the Indian Government.



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Training Program on Sandalwood Farming and Management of its Health Inaugurated

Such initiative will help attract the youth towards sandalwood farming, revive this declining art and help reposition India as a market leader in the trade, says Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Shri Giriraj Singh

As a part of the ongoing 'Azaadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' initiative, Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Shri Giriraj Singh inaugurated a training program on Sandalwood Farming and Management of its health via video conferencing on October 11, 2021 in association with the Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST), Bengaluru. The program is structured around the basics & benefits of Indian sandalwood, seed handling, nursery techniques and managing the health of the plant. Addressing the gathering, the Minister lauded this free of cost training initiative which he believes will help attract the youth towards sandalwood farming, revive this declining art & help reposition India as a market leader in the trade.

Sandalwood has been long associated with the Indian heritage & culture, as the country contributed 85 percent of the world' sandalwood trade erstwhile. However, off late this has been declining at a fast rate. With anti-bacterial, anti-biotic & anti-cancer benefits amongst others, sandalwood finds its uses in pharmaceuticals, personal care and furnitures.

Globally, India & Australia are the largest growers of sandalwood, while the biggest markets lie in the United States, China, Japan & the Indian domestic market. While in 2020 the world sandalwood market stood at USD 300 million, World Trade Research pegs the market size at USD 3 billion by 2040. Identifying this tremendous growth potential, the Minister laid emphasis on preparing for the upcoming demand from right now by creating export quality products. This he felt can be achieved by taking up multiple initiatives like establishing Sandalwood Technology Innovation centres in the growing states under the leadership of IWST, value addition in training & skill development as well as introducing new methods of cultivation among farmers & young entrepreneurs.

(Source: Press Information Bureau)

Women Participation in Sports

Rashi Sharma

The sports scenario for women started changing when P.T. Usha emerged on the sports era as one of the greatest athlete the country has ever produced. Her magical performances drew the attention of not only the citizens, but of media and the Government as well. Her 102 medals won at national and international tournaments created a sensation in the country and motivated generation of young women athletes. The win of Karnam Malleswari, the first Indian women who won a bronze medal in the 2000 Sydney Olympics in women's 69 kg category in weightlifting, started the illustrious journey of women in Olympics.

Outstanding and award-winning performance by Indian women contingent in recently concluded Tokyo Olympics has generated immense excitement, joy, pride and commemoration across the country. Olympic and international competitions are an arena for showcasing the potential grit and strength of human beings as it set new records every time and motivate sportspersons to excel and achieve new heights. Several countries have been continuously investing substantial resources and providing best of facilities to develop and sustain sports talent at the highest level as it is one of the important indicator of the quality of human development in any country.

However, just like every other sphere of life, women have had to fight for equality in the field of sports as well, making the history of women in sports a tumultuous one. The fact that in 1896, when Athens hosted the first Olympic games of the modern age, there was no participation of the women players, depicts the challenging journey of women athletes in international arena. Women sportspersons were allowed in the next Olympic Games in 1900, which were held at Paris. The reasons for this initial disparity can be argued that sports have functioned as a way to define masculinity, so female participations was marginalised owing to various reasons i.e. traditional family responsibilities, cultural and religious barriers. Further, there were financial disparities also and equal remuneration continues to remain a major issue in the women sports.

India also had the same situation. The participation of the Indian women in sports was negligible. The societal framework was



historically biased against the females, especially when it was practically considered a taboo to be a female athlete in the country. In such situation, predominantly rife with discrimination meted out towards the female gender, sports certainly act as a medium where these lines are effortlessly obscured. Being emancipating in its very nature - sports, with its own language, has its own way of uniting people without pausing to look at the gender. However, the rise of women in sports in India has been nothing but gradual. A little factual background would be apt to understand this journey.

Background

The very first year that Indian women made the journey to the Olympic Games happened in the 1924 Paris Olympics, when two women athletes from India took part. Placed in the pre-Independence era, the four subsequent editions of the Games saw nil participation from Indian women spanning two decades - 1928 to 1948. With the Second World War having just concluded and India gaining Independence in 1947, sports



in the newly democratic country looked for women again.

A contingent comprising of 60 men and women represented India in the 1952 Summer Olympic Games held in Helsinki. India competed in 42 events across 11 sports, including shooting and gymnastics for the first time. Dolly Nazir and Arati Saha participated in women swimming, and Nilima Ghose and Mary D'Souza participated in athletics.

However, it wasn't until the 1980 Moscow Games that Indian women became a regular feature of the Olympic entourage and their numbers kept growing steadily. A journey that began with 2 Indian female athletes at the quadrennial games in 1924 expanded in leaps and bounds to stand at 54 in the 2016 Rio Olympics. Interestingly, the Rio Games saw almost equal participation of men and women from India as the men athletes outnumbered the women only by 9 more members.

The sports scenario for women started changing when P.T. Usha emerged on the sports era as one of the greatest athlete the country has ever produced. Her magical performances drew the attention of not only the citizens, but of media and the Government as well. Her 102 medals won at national and international tournaments created a sensation in the country and motivated a whole generation of young women athletes. The win of Karnam Malleswari, the first Indian women who won a bronze medal in the 2000 Sydney Olympics in women's 69 kg category in weightlifting, started the illustrious journey of women in Olympics. Thereafter, the bronze medal win of Mary Kom and Saina Nehwal in London Olympics in 2012 and Silver medal of P.V. Sindhu in badminton and Bronze medal of Sakshi Malik in wrestling in 2016 Rio Olympics set the scenario of rise of Indian women in Sports. In the recently concluded Tokyo Olympics, P.V. Sindhu, Saikhom Mirabai Chanu and Lovlina Borgohain made India proud by winning medals and have clearly shown the positive change that is taking place in our country. While, Saikhom Mirabai Chanu won the Silver medal at the very first day of the Tokyo Olympics 2020, P. V. Sindhu became the first Indian women to win two Olympic medals. She won the Silver medal in Rio 2016 and in Tokyo 2020 she captured the Bronze medal. Also, Lovlina Borgohain achieved her first Olympic medal in Women's welterweight 64-69 kg

category of Boxing event, where she got bronze medal. The women hockey team also reached upto the semi-finals in Tokyo Olympics and won many accolades.

Apart from achieving success at Olympic games, women are attaining new heights in other games too. The achievement of Sania Mirza in Tennis, Mithali Raj in Cricket, Phogat sisters in wrestling, Deepika Kumari in Archery, Bula Chaudhary in swimming are noteworthy and inspiring young talents.

Policies and Programmes to Promote Sports

In 1954, the Indian government took its first step to promote sports by creating the All India Council of Sports (AICS). The AICS acted as an advisory body, informing the government on numerous areas including national sports policies, government funding of national sport governing bodies, and the coaching of elite athletes. The next significant policy initiative came in 1982, when a specific government department for sport, the Ministry of Sport (now the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sport, MYAS), was established. Next, in 1984, India introduced its first ever National Sports Policy. Additionally, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) was set up to promote the development of coaches and physical education teachers, participation in sport and physical activity, and infrastructure. Thereafter, to emphasise the importance of sport and physical education in the education sector, the National Education Policy and two distinct government units, the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sport (NSNIS) and the Lakshmi Bai National College of Physical Education (LNCPE) were introduced in 1986.

After these initial steps from 1954 to 1986, in 2001 national sports policy was introduced with a dual aim of mass participation in sport and excellence at the elite level. National Sports Development Code of India 2011, aimed to implement new strategies to achieve objectives set by the previous policies.

At present, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is running the following schemes to promote sports in the country, including rural, tribal and backward areas: -

- (i) Khelo India Scheme;
- (ii) Assistance to National Sports Federations;
- (iii) Special Awards to Winners in International sports events and their

Coaches; (iv) National Sports Awards, Pension to Meritorious Sports Persons; (v) Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Sports Welfare Fund; (vi) National Sports Development Fund; and (vii) Running Sports Training Centres through Sports Authority of India.

The majority of the sportspersons benefitting from these Schemes belong to the rural, backward, and tribal and women population of the country and are provided with regular training on residential and non-residential basis as per the approved norms of the Schemes.

Under the Khelo India Scheme, talent search has been started at grassroots level in two categories: sports potential talent identification and proven talent identification

Further, India is divided into five zones namely North, East, West, South and North-East zones to carry out talent identification. Grassroot Zonal Talent Identification Committees are formed to reach out to each and every corner of the country to shortlist the potential and proven athletes. Talent Identification is carried out in 20 sports disciplines in the age group of 8 to 14 years, wherein the country has the potential /advantage to excel at the international level.

Under the 'Talent Search and Development' vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, Khelo India Athletes identified and selected under the scheme are provided annual financial assistance of ₹ 6.28 lakh per athlete per annum which includes ₹ 1.20 lakh per annum as out of Pocket Allowance and ₹ 5.08 lakh for other facilities like coaching, sports science support, diet, equipment, consumables, insurance charges, etc. Further, each Khelo India Centre notified under the Scheme at district levels in various States/Union Territories are eligible to receive ₹ 5 lakh per discipline as one-time grant and ₹ 5 lakh per discipline as recurring grant.

Under the "Support to National/Regional/State Sports Academies" vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, sports academies are accredited for the training of the Khelo India athletes. 236 sports academies have so far been accredited across the country. Khelo India scheme also has a separate vertical for 'Sports for Women' and various competitions are organised under this to encourage women participation in sports.

Sports and Education

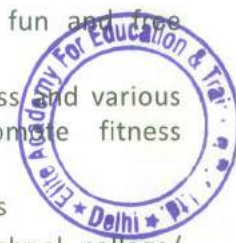
The need to integrate sports in education is well recognised globally as it serves to foster holistic development by promoting physical and psychological well-being while also enhancing cognitive abilities. The launch of FIT INDIA Movement on 29th August, 2019 with a view to make fitness an integral part of our daily lives has been a symbol of paradigm shift in our approach towards sports. The mission of the Movement is to bring about behavioural changes and move towards a more physically active lifestyle. It has the following objectives:

- To promote fitness as easy, fun and life activity
- To spread awareness on fitness and various physical activities that promote fitness through focused campaigns
- To encourage indigenous sports
- To make fitness reach every school, college/ university, panchayat/village, etc.
- To create a platform for citizens of India to share information, drive awareness and encourage sharing of personal fitness stories

The Fit India movement has created awareness about the importance of physical activities and encouraged the inclusion of sports right from the childhood at school level which is essential if we want to produce top class athletes and compete at international arena.

The recently launched National Education Policy 2020 highlights the value of sports integrated education in developing human capital, increasing productivity, and fostering social harmony. It states that the curriculum must include basic arts, crafts, humanities, games, sports and fitness, languages, literature, culture, and values, in addition to science and mathematics, to develop all aspects and capabilities of learners; and make education more well-rounded, useful, and fulfilling to the learner.

NEP-2020 also emphasises on sports-integration in pedagogical approaches that utilise physical activities including indigenous sports, in pedagogical practises to help develop skills such as collaboration, self-initiative, self-direction, self-discipline, teamwork, responsibility, citizenship, etc. It focuses on sports-integrated learning in



classroom transactions to help students adopt fitness as a lifelong attitude and to achieve the related life skills along with the levels of fitness as envisaged in the Fit India Movement.

It would be worthwhile to point out here that in education, at all levels, from primary to Sr. Secondary, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) is more than 1, which shows equal or more participation of girl child at school level. Under the centrally sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha, first time sports grant on an annual basis to all government schools has been introduced in the year 2018 and from 2021, an additional Sports grant of upto Rs. 25000 to schools has been provisioned in case atleast 2 students of that school win a medal in Khelo India school games at the National level. Thus, sports have been made an integral part of education rather than an extracurricular activity.

All these recent initiatives have provided much needed systemic interventions and change of mindset concerning to sports. However, the road to equality in every sphere of life is full of challenges and in sports too, there are multifaceted challenges which are required to be addressed.

Challenges for Women in Sports

1. **Socio-cultural issues:** Herbert Spencer in 1894 in his book 'Education, Intellectual, Moral and Physical', described the way physical education was looked at in a girls and boys school in his times. He describes the boys playground as an "open gravelled space with ample room for sports and exercises", while the girls school playground had laid out "grim-grass plots, gravel walk, shrubs and flowers, with absolutely no chance for any physical recreation". Spencer, points out that the cause behind this variance is the way society distinct the role of a woman and how sports was perceived to diminish a feminine exterior. He stated, "Women developing a robust physique is undesirable, and rude health and abundant figure are considered plebeian". What was true in 1894, paradoxically is still the perception of majority in 21st century India.

There are certain roles, responsibilities and expectations from the women in the society, they are supposed to play an important role in keeping family traditions, raising

children, sacrificing their career for family etc. Moreover, participation in sports require a healthy and nutritious diet which is missing in Indian families. Due to limited means, the diet of girls and women is the last priority, even though, wholesome and nourishing diet is the most crucial component for sports. Further, from being belittled by the biased societal view to facing a huge gender pay gap, women players have always been victims of narrow minded attitude. Still the country has seen the rise of many female sports players in India like Karnam Malleshwari, Mary Kom, Phogat sisters, Mirabai Chanu and P.V. Sindhu, which reflects that this stereotype is definitely changing. Sports play a greater role in abolishing gender discrimination and providing women their right place in the society.

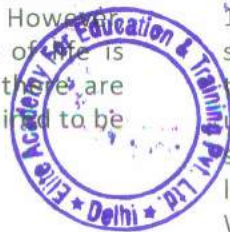
2. Access to Facilities and Safety Issues:

Currently, India houses approximately 100 sports facilities fulfilling international standards of sports infrastructure. In addition, there are government-owned college and university grounds, community centres, sporting facilities and grounds owned by urban local bodies, grounds owned by Resident Welfare Associations, and facilities owned by private entities. These facilities are largely neglected and ignored in terms of utilisation and maintenance. Also, a majority of the Indian sports infrastructure facilities are mainly used for hosting international, national, state and district-level games.

There cannot be increased participation of women and girls if they do not get proper access to the necessary facilities. Further, there is a general consensus that lack of security is the biggest problem for a female player. Parents do not feel comfortable in sending their daughters to participate in events outside their hometown. Hence, the girl players miss out on vital exposure and opportunities to experience competitive sports. There is also fear that the studies and academic performance would get neglected.

3. Lack of Systemic Interventions and Resources:

It's a general perception that Indian athletes who have achieved international success are exceptions rather than products of the country's



sports system. This is more relevant in case of women athletes. Although, there are schemes and endowments for athletes that guarantee a basic minimum standard of living, but it has not been much effective. The challenge is not the lack of talent or capacity for India to produce great women sportspersons, it is the complications related with bringing in coaches and training persons in rural and tribal areas and providing young athletes with the resources and support they need. The sports federations of India need to act more proactively in terms of providing better infrastructure, coaching facilities and transparent system of selection purely on basis of merit to promote sports culture in India. In this context, interventions like Khelo India becomes more important which have comprehensive approach and has been introduced to revive the sports culture in the country at the grassroots level by building a strong framework for all sports played in our country.

Sports in India is in the process of development. To accelerate this rate of development, holistic approach should be adopted. Efforts are required in developing infrastructure, identifying sports talents, organising regular sports events, and generating awareness at the grass root level.



4. **Lack of Awareness Among the Masses:** The problem in India is not only the lack of resources or talent, but much more fundamental. In order to promote sports at grassroot level, we really needs to focus on changing attitudes and convictions in our communities about playing sports and finding local role models, initiate intensive mass awareness campaigns about the various myths and prejudices surrounding sports and what girls can achieve through it. Further, an exchange of ideas is important on the changing roles and perception of women in our society, and we need to provide safe public spaces for girls to play. As we know the path to becoming a doctor, we also need to have a more transparent, reliable and financially feasible path carved out to become professional athletes. Participation in sport can be an invigorating and empowering experience for women. Being an athlete, especially a skilled athlete, can make her feel physically stronger, more competent, and more in control of her life as an independent individual.

Way Forward and Conclusion

Sports in India is in the process of development. To accelerate this rate of development, holistic approach should be adopted. Efforts are required in developing infrastructure, identifying sports talents, organising regular sports events, and generating awareness at the grass root level. These steps will surely play an instrumental role in augmenting the resources and enhancing capacities of athletes. Further, to develop sports at the grassroots level, it is imperative to integrate sports with education as envisaged in NEP-2020. NEP-2020 promotes multi disciplinarity and a holistic education across the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and sports in order to ensure the unity and integrity of all knowledge. It emphasises on no hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning.

Furthermore, sport in its most basic form encourages balanced participation and has the capacity to promote gender equality (**SDG Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**). Through sport and physical activity, women and girls can be empowered and benefit from the constructive impact that sport has on health and psychosocial conditions.

Female participation in sport has been able to successfully challenge the stereotypes and social roles mostly concomitant with women. Sports can help women and girls exhibit their abilities and achievements to society by emphasising their skills which they have attained with sheer hard work and sincerity. This certainly improves self-esteem and self-confidence in women participants. Further, sport also offers opportunities for showcasing the accomplishments of women without taking into consideration any kind of discrimination related to gender, financial status, or ethnic differences.

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Rural India-Sporting Optimism and Hope

Irtif Mehraj Lone

The developments in the sports industry are indicative that the future is promising for sports across the globe and particularly in India. The increasing participation of both rural and urban population in the sport activities has led to the increasing infrastructure building across the country, with programs like “Khelo India”, with focus on both rural and urban population. This helps in providing opportunities to the youth from rural areas to represent the nation at highest levels and in turn motivates more and more youth to take up sports as a profession.



Sports, today, is an integral part of any nation’s identity. The national sports teams competing in the global events, like the cricket or football world cups or competing for the gold in Olympic games brings out the passion to the fore. The global sports market is estimated to have reached the \$458.8 billion in 2019, however due to the onset of the pandemic that affected almost all the economic sectors around the globe, it was believed to be at \$388.3 billion in 2020. The compound annual growth rate of the sports industry has been 3.4 percent since 2015 and the sports market is expected to reach \$599.9 billion by 2025, and \$826.0 billion by 2030.

On the other side, it teaches us to nurture our character and discipline our lives to the healthier

and more active lifestyles, which becomes means to achieve both mental and physical wellness. The history has demonstrated that all civilised nations have stressed on the importance of sports and promoted sporting culture, for the development of its human index.

The enormous consumer demand has made sports one of the largest industries globally both considering the employment it creates and revenue it generates. It has become a multibillion-dollar industry, which fans the deep passion in players as well as spectators across the globe.

In India, this industry has in recent past picked up and today contributes both in revenue as well as employment generation across the country. With the kind of growth, the industry is seeing, the career profiles in the sport industry are

getting varied as well such as athletes, coaches, trainers, event managers, public relation officers, Coordinator of sports organisations, marketing consultant, program and facility manager, professional sports promoter, sports equipment and product sales, sport event planner and manager and sports sponsorship specialist.

The sports economy in India offers various opportunities to be captured over a period. The scalability of these opportunities is huge as well. By 2025, one-fifth of the world's working age population will be Indian. By 2030, there will be over 850 million internet users in India. By 2035 India's five largest cities will have economies of comparable size to middle income countries today. The estimated size of the Indian Sports Industry in 2020 is Rs. 5894 crores. This report only includes - sponsorship spends, celebrity endorsement and media spend on sports properties.

Sports sector has undergone an immense transformation, with series of initiatives by the government in form of "Khelo India" to improve the sports infrastructure across the country. The private sector has been playing an important role as well by organising leagues and tournaments, scouting and sponsoring talented sportspersons at the grassroots level. The fact that with more than a billion population, majority would still pick cricket as their first sports choice. Though, the sports like hockey, tennis and football do manage an appearance every now and again. The various sports federations have followed the path of Board of Control for Cricket in India, by initiating the league-based tournaments. More than a dozen major league-based sports tournaments were launched including Indian Premier League (Cricket), Pro Kabaddi League, Indian Super League (football), Premier Badminton League (PBL) and Hockey India League (HIL). Most of these leagues have acquired much success on ground and has increased viewership to these sports. It has also received much of the help from the online streaming of most of these events and digital marketing through the social media applications. The great initiatives like Indian Premier League, Hockey India League, Premier Badminton League, Pro kabaddi, Indian Super League and other such premier leagues is not only changing the outlook of these games but also helping to bring in the talent pool of sportsmen across the various sports. These

initiatives in sports are also proof that sports other than cricket also have a future in the country.

The health benefits of participation in sports are well known. Numerous recent studies from a wide range of disciplines have shown that the increased participation in physical activities is positive for individual health promotion. At present, a physically inactive lifestyle has been recognised as a major contributor to the obesity epidemic, as well as to the burden of chronic diseases including diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

Moreover, participation in sports also has a positive impact on the mental well-being of individuals. Physically active participants are less likely to experience depression, have a stronger sense of coherence, and less perceived stress in comparison to those who exercise less frequently. They are more satisfied with their lives and less likely to suffer from mental health problems. On the other hand, the role of participation in sports in supporting community-based public health has received considerable attention in recent studies. Within a community, sport participation is one of the important sources through which social interactions could be achieved that might increase the ability of individuals to engage meaningfully in local society, thereby improving the social capital of the whole population and the social inclusion. There is a strong evidence that sports participation has its effects on the social behavior particularly for young men. There is considerable evidence of the positive impact of sport and exercise on educational outcomes. Through psychological benefits such as enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, and cognitive benefits such as concentration and thinking skills, sport has positive effects on a number of final outcomes including educational behavior.

The private sectors contribution in organising various leagues across the sports is providing opportunity to play the sports professionally which provides economic stability as well as fame to the young rising stars in the sports activities. This has also led to increasing number of start-ups delving into the sports activities. While Bollywood has played an important role in portraying the struggles as well as fame which many of the sports persons have achieved, both the revenue as well as employment generation this industry is providing is set to increase manifold in the near future.



The onset of the leagues in many sports now has also increased the participation of rural population in various sports. This, however, has also led to development of sports infrastructure across the country ensuring every household even in villages has access to the sports facilities, providing opportunity. Sport has become an integral part of the commercialisation of culture, together with cinema, travel, shopping and eating out, which has come to form part of the mass entertainment industry, closely linked to the mechanisms of the market. The commercialisation of sport has stimulated new needs and expectations, and sport has become firmly established as dramatic entertainment.

Another, positive side of the increased participation in the sports activities is the flourishing sports goods industry. This industry has been providing employment to lakhs of people. The share of Indian exports has also increased manifold, with the improved quality of the sporting goods and have created a global identity for these products. Nearly, an estimated 60 percent of the total sports good production in India is exported across the globe.

Sports and physical activity have a huge touch base and hence has the government interest in delivering both the policy and its implementation on the ground. However, as is being done, the role of government in high level policy development that guides how funds are to be invested rather than going to the micro-level decisions. This distance is particularly important in sport where specialist expertise is needed to make the best and most informed decisions, guided by the needs of the customer.

Sport is a key part of local communities, but it looks different in different places – there is no top-down approach that works everywhere. The understanding of communities enables them to target opportunities and encourage mass participation. Local Responsibilities Councils also have an important leadership role to play; bringing schools, voluntary sport clubs, national

governing bodies of sport and the private sector together to forge partnerships, unblock barriers of participation and improve the local sport delivery system. Therefore, the local authorities have a crucial role to play in delivering sport and physical activity opportunities particularly to the certain groups including women and girls, disabled people and those from lower socio-economic groups, as they are less likely to play sport and be physically active than the population in general. Varied factors may be responsible for this under representation. The lower socio-economic groups in relation with access to sports is not defined just by the practical barriers like cost and availability of the right informal activities but also emotional barriers around perceptions of safety and ownership of local space as well as wider social circumstances.

Sport as a social phenomenon and cultural practice has been extensively and intensely affected by the evolution of urban areas. The sports participation in cities has increased dramatically. And this has also had its effects on the increasing health awareness among the people. Instead of political goals, people participate in sport and physical exercises for keeping fitness; for entertainment; for communication with friends; for mental health and for increasing individual physical capability.

Sport as a social phenomenon and cultural practice has been extensively and intensely affected by the evolution of urban areas. The sports participation in cities has increased dramatically. And this has also had its effects on the

increasing health awareness among the people. Instead of political goals, people participate in sport and physical exercises for keeping fitness; for entertainment; for communication with friends; for mental health; and for increasing individual physical capability. They exercise with family members, with friends or individually. Some of them attend sport clubs; some of them exercise in their neighborhood compound. Some of them hire personal fitness coaches; some of them attend courses that are offered by their community.

In the recent past, we have also seen that the focus of the Indian cinema has been to put forth the discourse that the rural India is epicentre of producing the best of the best sportspersons, representing the nation across the globe. The movies such as Mary Kom, Dangal, Bhag Milkha Bhag, Chak de India are just a few to speak of.

The Phogat sisters, which became a household name or MC Mary Kom, who created ripples in the boxing world, are not only the



examples of sports persons coming from rural India. The winning streak of India, which was lauded across during the Tokyo Olympics and paralympics, were kept high by the sports persons coming from the rural India. The amazing stories of each of the athletes, and the struggle and passion they have had for the game is in itself a great motivation for the next generation of the sports talent which is to be scouted. The boxers, the hockey players, wrestlers and javelin throwers, these men and women come from hitherto unheard-of locations on the map of India.

This also signifies the presence of talent we have among our rural population and also to the awareness among the people, with more and more medals coming our way in sports like Kabaddi, athletics, wrestling, weightlifting, and boxing in international sporting events such as Olympics, Commonwealth Games and Asian Games.

Much of the credit also goes to the fact that, in rural India, specifically in few regions, the sports are not only being taken as a hobby but as a serious career option. This also has its roots in sports being recognised as a career which long with a dignified livelihood also brings with it the limelight and fame.

The process of empowering youth is inclusive and characterised by respect and focus on working together with youths to identify problems they face and find solutions. In this way youth could experience increased confidence because they feel their contribution is valued. Youth development programs have the potential to achieve the desired skills and competencies.

Desired skills and competencies could be achieved by youth development programs focusing on broader developmental needs of youths within their individual and community contexts rather than on a single issue. A comprehensive and holistic approach that addresses challenges facing youths, their families, peer groups, schools, neighbourhood, and community is essential to reinforce new skills and knowledge.

The growth of the sports industry in India has also provided an opportunity for various Start-ups to take up this particular industry data/content aggregation, education and training,

online retail, technology, online ticket-booking as sports infrastructure building. The growth of startups in this sector is likely to witness an unprecedented growth as the market is still in its infancy. The startups like Smaaash Entertainment (which had to wind up during pandemic) and Kick, were providing experiential infrastructure for playing outdoor games in an indoor environment. The sports persons such as Mahesh Bhupathi and Yuvraj Singh are also backing startups such as Sports 365.in. The other set of startups in this industry are trying to provide technological interventions for improving the performance of the sports persons, by providing data and analysis based on the trends. However, the public sports investment should focus on sustained release of benefits to promote the rural sports of economy as there is an intrinsic fit between the development of rural sports and rural economic development.

Because of geographical environment, the influence factors of traditional ideas and the income of the rural population, and most of the sports consumption consciousness; the rural sports market are still in the primary stage. With the new rural sports construction, rural sports activities, the transformation of sports industry in the rural areas has become imminent. This shall promote the new rural sports consumption market development. Therefore, the expansion of sports consumption, will promote the development of new rural sports industry and related industries. The imbalance of economic development, regional differences also create the imbalance of the development of rural sports.

Conclusion

Sports along with providing the opportunities for both being economically content and healthful also provide youth with opportunity for social interaction and developing networks. The cross-cultural exchanges, which promotes mutual respect among the participants which provides the huge opportunity for nation building and strengthen the principles of unity in diversity.

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Importance of Health and Fitness in Sports

Urvashi Prasad and Adhiraj Parthasarathy

The multiple policy initiatives introduced for training and development of youth in recent years have focused on their all-round development with a special emphasis on sports, health and well-being. Health and fitness are crucial for the growth and development of the nation. One of the most important aspects of good health is hygiene and sanitation, an area which was largely neglected until the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission. The remarkable success of this program has gradually started to show a positive impact on the overall health indicators of the nation.

When we consider the importance of health and fitness in our daily lives, we need to look no further for advice than to Mahatma Gandhi and his philosophy. There was after all no better spokesperson who emphasised and demonstrated the importance of fitness in daily life. As we attempt to unravel the importance of good health and fitness in our daily lives, we ought to pay close attention to what the Mahatma said. A man who experimented with hygiene, fasting, abstinence and vegetarianism, he was an early pioneer in many ways of a healthy lifestyle. Gandhi ji placed tremendous emphasis on self-reliance or 'Aatmanirbharta'. As an integral part of his philosophy, he believed that individuals

should practice self-reliance as a pathway to good health.

Gandhi ji also believed that human health and fitness requires a holistic approach - one that integrates all aspects of the mind, body and environment. This is an area in which we have made significant progress over the last few years under the stewardship of the Government which realising the importance of a holistic approach to health has launched several schemes to promote a fitter and healthier India.

From the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan whose focus is to improve access to sanitation in the country thereby improving the overall health of the nation, to the POSHAN Abhiyaan which



focuses on nutrition, to Khelo India and the Fit India Movement which seeks to promote sports across the country, all aspects of health and fitness have been tackled in a comprehensive manner. The results are starting to reflect in the social and health indicators of citizens.

Health and fitness are crucial for the growth and development of the nation. One of the most important aspects of good health is hygiene and sanitation, an area which was largely neglected until the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission. The remarkable success of this program has gradually started to show a positive impact on the overall health indicators of the nation. Data from the recent rounds of the National Family Health Survey highlights steady improvements in the usage of individual household toilets in rural India. Over 9.5 crore individual household toilets have been built since the launch of the mission. While developments in water and sanitation might seem irrelevant to the world of sports, ensuring optimal hygiene and access to sanitation facilities are stepping stones towards creating a healthier future for generations to come. Further, studies have shown that eliminating open defecation has a significant positive impact on health.

Good health is also the focus of the newly launched Mission POSHAN 2.0, which aims to make India 'Kuposhan Mukta'. Nutrition is a major challenge which hampers the progress of our nation. The implementation of programs like POSHAN Abhiyaan, Integrated Child Development Services and Anaemia Mukta Bharat is being intensified. Mission POSHAN 2.0 focuses on a targeted and intensified approach for tackling nutrition with a special focus on vulnerable groups. State Governments are also collaborating with civil society and community-based organisations for generating awareness, promoting household behavior change and making nutrition a Jan Andolan.

Mental health has been included as an important focus area in the National Youth Policy, 2020. In light of the increased stress faced by youth as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is

imperative to focus on creating greater awareness among youth to identify mental health problems and enable access to professional help in a timely fashion. After all, robust mental health plays a vital role in fitness and sports as well.

Undoubtedly, access to nutrition, health, clean drinking water, and sanitation are the building blocks of the fitness ecosystem. Simultaneously, the government has also launched a number of initiatives that have a more direct impact on sports and fitness. One program that has become a tremendous success, not only in India but also globally, is the International Day of Yoga - held every year on the 21st of June. This has been made possible through the renewed and sustained emphasis that the Government has placed on Yoga.

Yoga has emerged as a multi-dimensional solution to many health challenges. Regular practice of Yoga offers tremendous benefits. The body's efficiency is enhanced as energies are channelised in a cohesive fashion. A peaceful mental framework leads to better imagination, creativity and boosts the intellect. This prevents fatigue while also strengthening the immune system.

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framework leads to better imagination, creativity and boosts the intellect. This prevents fatigue while also strengthening the immune system. Further, emotional control is improved while at the spiritual level, appreciation of the inner consciousness is reinforced. While modern medicine can cure physical ailments, Yoga effectively prevents pathologies from setting in and helps to tackle inner tribulations by serving as a medicine for the soul. When these inner troubles or conflicts are left untreated, they cause problems like insomnia, hypertension, psychiatric disorders and suicidal tendencies, among others. In the post-COVID-19 era, we will need to greatly emphasise on preventive healthcare, which will further enhance the relevance of Yoga and make this ancient practice even more popular. After all, 'free from illness, a path to wellness' - that is the path of Yoga.

AYUSH based nutrition is another aspect. The traditional Indian concept of food is important for youth health and well-being. The concept of a balanced diet explained in Ayurveda justifies

all essential requirements of the body. Many diseases in their early stages can to a great extent be controlled through a healthy diet.

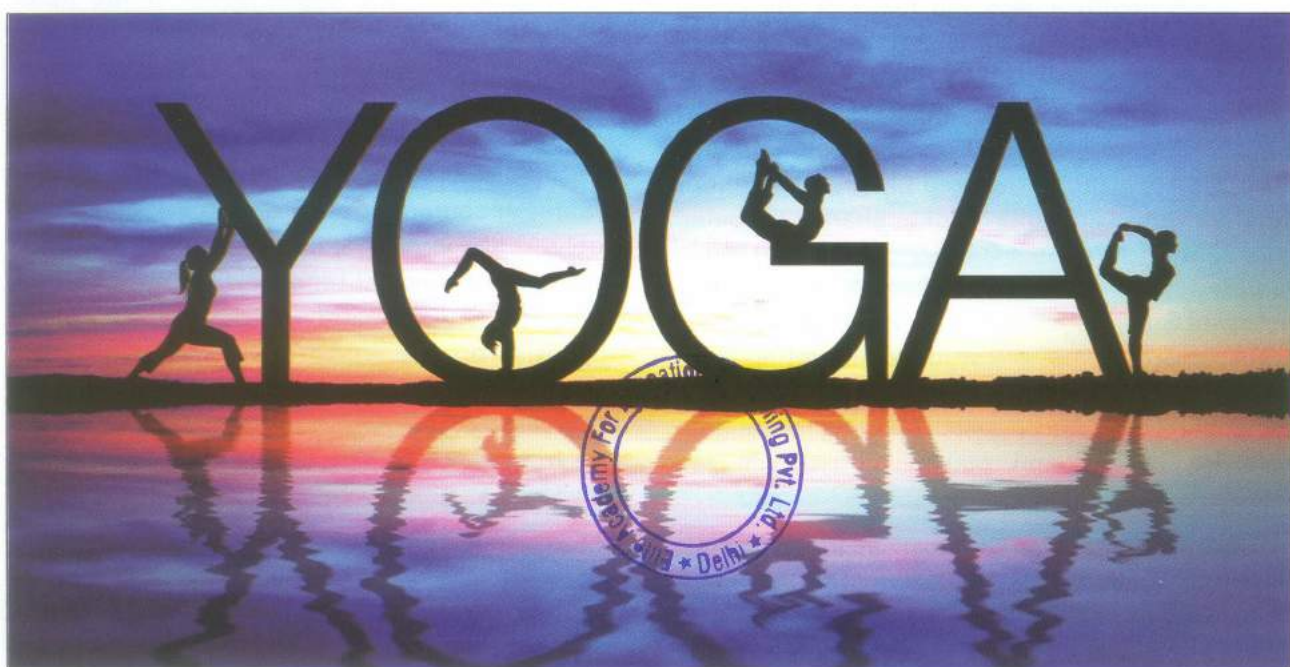
In 2014, the Government constituted a Ministry of AYUSH to harness traditional learning and systems of medicine. Centers of excellence for Yoga and wellness have been established. Introducing children to Yoga early on in their lives and integrating Yoga education with sports education can reinvigorate ancient Indian practices. The Report of the Group of Secretaries on Education and Social Development, 2017 had recommended that physical education in schools should be promoted by making Yoga and sports compulsory. A crowning feather in the cap of the Ministry's efforts was to get Yogasana recognised as a sport.

The Ministry of AYUSH is also running a campaign 'Yoga for All' as part of the Fit India movement. 'Yoga for All' is aimed at creating mass awareness about the benefits of Yoga and encouraging one Indian from every family to adopt the practice of Yoga over the next few years. This initiative will motivate and inspire citizens to internalise Yoga as a daily habit for improving their health and well-being. The Ministry of AYUSH, in association with the World Health Organization (WHO), is also the developing M-Yoga Application for demonstrating Common Yoga Protocols as part of the 'Be Healthy, Be Mobile' initiative of the WHO

and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

In addition to the work done by the Ministry of AYUSH, India has a dedicated Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS). The Ministry is well known for its network of Yuva Kendras across the country. Over the last few years, the Ministry has launched several Central Sector Schemes focused on enhancing the sports infrastructure and promoting sports excellence. Besides incentivising successful sportsmen who win awards for India in multinational events, it also seeks to create and ensure a pipeline of such success stories in the future.

Khelo India focuses on providing better sports infrastructure and facilities across the country, leading to the emergence of talented athletes who would make the country proud by their performances in the international sports arena. Creating a new breed of sportspersons who will bring India fame and glory internationally requires the establishment of a framework and ecosystem in which sports education and training is integrated seamlessly, alongside world-class infrastructure. It is with this objective in mind that the Government launched the Khelo India initiative in 2017-18. A Central Sector Scheme with a budget of over Rs. 575 crore in 2019-20, this umbrella program seeks to identify, nurture and train sportspersons across the country. An





integral and unique aspect of this program is the focus on building infrastructure at the grassroots level and identifying talent through a bottom-up approach.

The Khelo India program, which includes a component of identifying talent in rural India, is focused on creating Centers for Excellence or world-class sports training facilities in the country. Using technology-driven solutions for talent identification and nurturing, it has an ambitious agenda comprising of twelve pillars centered around infrastructure development, competitive games and community coaching opportunities. With a unique focus on promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games, it ensures that India's rural residents have a level playing field and access to the same opportunities as people from the larger urban centres.

The Khelo India program's first pillar is Play Field Development, which focuses on primarily creating the base infrastructure in terms of stadia and courts for priority sports disciplines. Its second pillar is Community Coaching Development, which focuses on identifying mentors within the community and linking them with the third pillar, State-Level Khelo India Centres for Excellence. In addition, Annual Sports Competitions- for youth, students and different age groups - constitute the fourth pillar. The fifth pillar is the primary focus of Khelo India- spotting and nurturing talent across the nation through a nationwide hunt. Other pillars of this program are targeting at specific groups including school children, women, people with disabilities as well as a focus on sports for peace, development, and promotion of indigenous cultures.

As of May 2021, over 217 Khelo India Centres had been established across the country, with the target to open over 1,000 such centers over the next four years, including atleast one centre in every district of India. The objective of these centers is to work towards ensuring excellence in the Olympics by nurturing youth from an early age. In the years since its launch Khelo India has conducted over three large-scale games.

While Khelo India focuses on sportspersons and nurturing youth talent, it has been a year since a related program, Fit India initiative seeks

to improve fitness levels for all age groups. With components like FIT India Cyclothon, and FIT India Walkathon, the focus is on incorporating behaviour change and integrating fitness into the daily regimen of citizens. The thrust of the program, 'Fitness Ka Dose Aadha Ghanta Roz' has been lauded by WHO and the program has managed to gather traction quickly, with celebrity sportspeople like Virat Kohli endorsing the program.

The Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) was launched in July, 2014 by the MYAS with the aim of identifying, grooming and preparing potential medal prospects primarily for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Selected athletes are supported under the National Sports Development Fund for customised training at institutes with world-class facilities. Financial assistance towards diet, food supplements and equipment has also been enhanced for senior athletes, junior and sub-junior athletes.

An impetus has been provided to MYAS's efforts following the decision of the Ministry of Finance in 2016 to include sports infrastructure in the harmonised master list of infrastructure sub-sectors. Following this decision, the sports sector is now eligible for obtaining long-term financial support from banks and other financial institutions at par with infrastructure projects. It is expected that such parity in financial support will boost investment in sports infrastructure, encourage private investment, promote health and fitness, as well as generate additional employment opportunities.

In 2016, NITI Aayog released 'Let's Play-Action Plan for Revitalising Sports in India'. The document presents a 20-point action plan which highlights key areas for strengthening the sports ecosystem in the country. These action points are divided into a short-term vision (4 to 8 years) and a medium to long-term vision (8 to 15 years). The action points enlist various initiatives which need to be taken for achieving the desired target of 50 medals in the 2024 Summer Olympics. NITI's Action Plan makes multiple recommendations including strengthening infrastructure for sports through the Public-Private-Partnership mode, dedicating a fixed proportion of expenditure

incurred by schools for bolstering sports infrastructure and equipment as well as hosting international events at regular intervals.

Forty years ago, a track and field athlete like P.T. Usha struggled against the odds to become a household name. Less than a decade ago, a star like Mirabai Chanu had to struggle against many odds to get access to good training and even had to hitch rides with truck drivers to train at the Sports Academy in Manipur. Rural India's talent faced an uphill task in achieving success in the international arena. Khelo India, and the other initiatives of the Government are focused on changing this scenario, ensuring that no Mirabai Chanu goes unnoticed, and that sportspersons including from rural areas achieve their full potential.

The multiple policy initiatives introduced for training and development of youth in recent years have focused on their all-round development with a special emphasis on sports, health and well-being. As we look back at our nation's journey in the realm of sports, we must acknowledge the significant progress made over the last decade by following Gandhiji's diktats for good health including sanitation and hygiene; nutrition; Yoga and self-reliance. We must also acknowledge the success of programs like Khelo India and Fit India in ensuring that health, fitness and wellness become a priority for all citizens in the country.

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The Fit India Movement

FIT INDIA Movement was launched on 29th August, 2019 by Honourable Prime Minister with a view to make fitness an integral part of our daily lives. The mission of the Movement is to bring about behavioural changes and move towards a more physically active lifestyle. Towards achieving this mission, Fit India proposes to undertake various initiatives and conduct events to achieve the following objectives:



- To promote fitness as easy, fun and free.
- To spread awareness on fitness and various physical activities that promote fitness through focused campaigns.
- To encourage indigenous sports.
- To make fitness reach every school, college/university, panchayat/village, etc.
- To create a platform for citizens of India to share information, drive awareness and encourage sharing of personal fitness stories.

(Source: https://fitindia.gov.in/)

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FORTHCOMING ISSUE

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COMING SOON

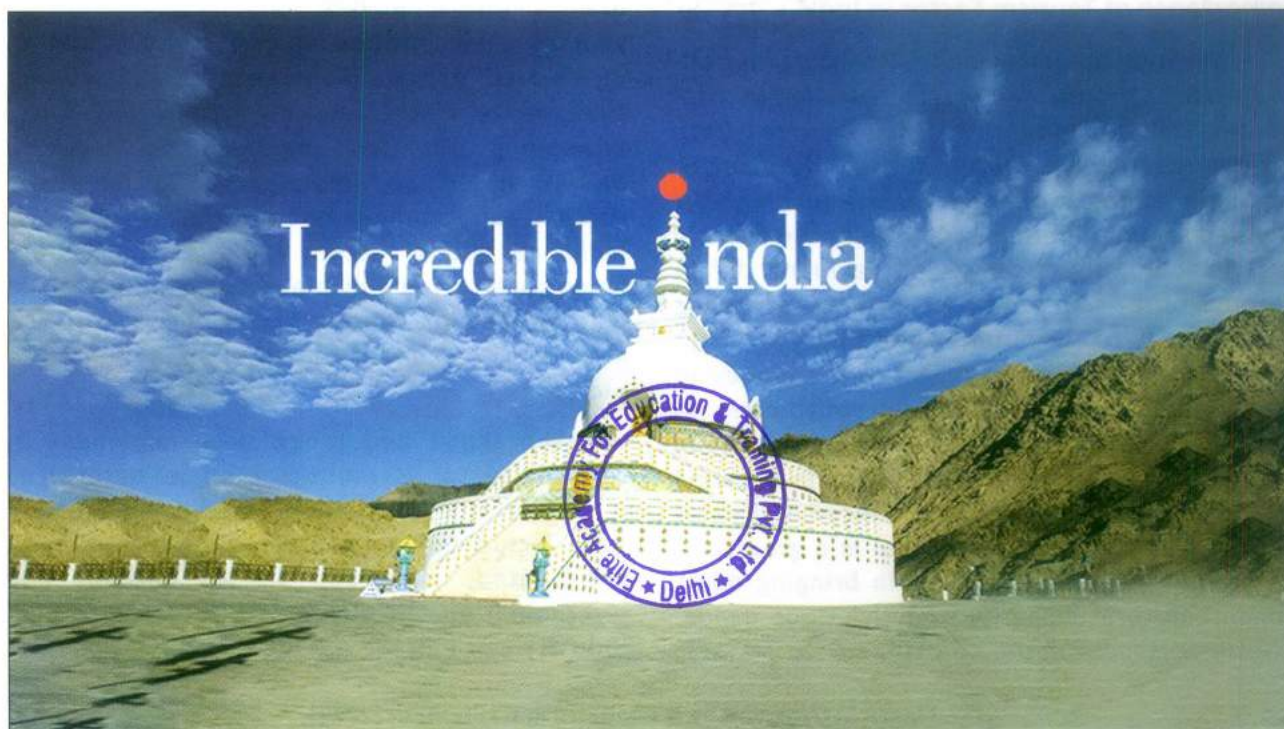
Smart Agriculture





'Atithi Devo Bhava': Growth of Indian Tourism Sector

Dr. Amiya Kumar Mohapatra and Dr. Nandeesh V Hiremath



Tourism sector is the fastest growing and largest industry in terms of its economic benefits and socio-economic impacts and enabling equity. India enjoys respect globally, with its distinct feature of '*richest culture and diverse heritage*'. India's glorious traditions and rich cultural heritage laid the foundation of the Indian tourism sector. India has been considered as the '*Tourist Paradise*' because of its flora and fauna, architectural monuments, music, painting, art and crafts, dances, different cultures and languages, customs/traditions and varied festivals – which no other country in the world can boast of and/or endowed with.

The state of economic development of any country depends significantly upon the relative contributions of the primary, secondary and services sector and the contribution of the services sector to the GDP decides the nature and quality of development. In India, it is found that the contribution of the services sector to GDP is around 55 percent and out of that the share of the tourism sector is significant. Tourism sector contributes about 5 percent to GDP and also creates direct and sustainable employment. It is witnessed that 1 out of 10 jobs created in India are from the tourism sector. Further, it generates

foreign exchange earnings through enhancing exports. Overall, the impact of the tourism sector is multi-dimensional, as all the producing sectors are interconnected and interdependent.

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crafts, dances, different cultures and languages, customs/traditions and varied festivals – which no other country in the world can boast of and /or endowed with. A myriad of cultural expressions can be experienced, when tourists travels across India making them immense proud feeling about the ‘culturally-rich Indians’ and that constitutes the bedrock of Indian tourism.

Importance of Tourism Sector in India

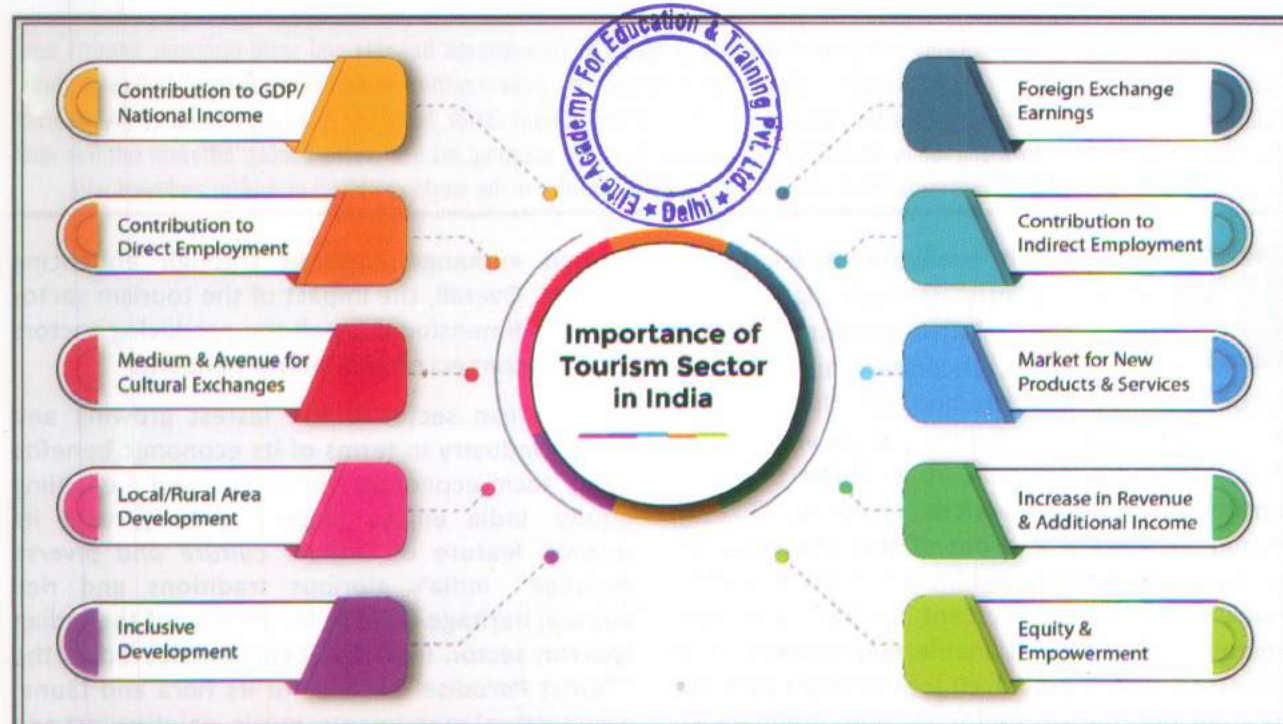
The tourism sector being the consumption-oriented economic sector creates a great deal of demand for work and hence provides both direct employment within the tourism sector and indirect employment in the complementary/derived sectors. Tourism sector helps the country in correcting the balance of payment deficit through the generation of foreign exchange earnings. It contributes significantly to our economic growth by fostering new avenues of employment and subsequently contributes to the revenue generation of the economy. Tourism sector has a high multiplier effect in creating employment and enhancing the income. It helps in re-distribution of income and is a great tool of poverty reduction. It helps in bringing down the urban-rural disparity and rich-poor divide. The importance of the tourism sector in India

has many facets and multiple implications for the integrated socio-economic development which are summarised in Figure 1.

Tourism sector is one of the most preferred sectors for alleviating poverty, inequality and unemployment in diverse and thickly populated country like India. It provides large scale employment to tourists’ assistants, hawkers, taxi drivers, tourist guides, photographers, street vendors and provides indirect employment in its derived sectors. This sector also opens-up avenues for travel agencies, supply industries, advertising agencies, food/catering industry, motels, hotels and restaurants. To meet the demand for accommodation of the tourists, new buildings, hotels, motels, and guest houses are being constructed which also provide large-scale employment to construction industry workers, engineers, carpenters, painters, and plumbers, etc.

The scope and range of employment in tourism sector is multi-faceted in nature, as it provides opportunities to all categories/ages including young and old; educated and uneducated; male and female without any discrimination. It being a labour-intensive industry can employ a large number of people,

Figure 1: Designed by Mohapatra and Hiremath (2021)



especially migrants from the agriculture sector. Thereby, it helps in reducing a great deal of pressure from the agricultural sector.

The growth of the tourism sector is positively related to the economic growth of a nation. This also significantly nurtures entrepreneurship skills and initiatives. It has been contributing to enhanced quality of life, promotes arts/handicrafts and contributes in the increasing awareness about the conservation of environment and cultural heritage. In addition to job creation and additional income, it opens-up opportunities and markets for new products and services, which are auxiliary yet important part of integrated development of the region/state. The sector has great economic impact on the different forms of employment; and helps in increasing female participation, increase in the social status of workers and better standard of living with increase in social cohesion. It is a sector which brings all kinds of happiness to both the host and the visitors and creates a great place for spreading global peace and happiness. Simply stated, 'the tourism sector has been in the business of creating experiences and unforgettable memories for the tourists/travellers of a variety of segments', which is the heart and essence of its relevance, growth and eminence for holistic development.

Growth Trends of Tourism Sector in India

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted the tourism sector globally and India is no exception, rather it affected more livelihoods than elsewhere. Hence, it is observed that there was a drastic fall in tourism activities for about 15-18 months, since March 2020. However, when the data is analysed for a decade covering the pre-COVID period (2009-2019), it is interesting to notice that the tourism sector was flourishing and having a rising trend in terms of its contribution to GDP, employment and foreign exchange earnings (Table 1). Apart from that in post-COVID period, if things improve, for sure the tourism sector will follow the trend of the past decade. Therefore, to boost and revive the tourism sector, the government has been working and shall continue to accelerate the tourism-related activities to bring back the sector into the much-needed track, as it is impacting and contributing to millions of

livelihoods, especially the small and marginalised sections of the society.

Table 1: Trends and Growth Analysis of Tourism Sector (2009-2019)

| Year | Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) (In million) | Domestic Tourist Visits (in million) | Foreign Exchange Earnings (US\$ in million) |
|------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2009 | 5.17 | 668.80 | 11136 |
| 2010 | 5.78 | 747.70 | 14490 |
| 2011 | 6.31 | 864.53 | 17707 |
| 2012 | 6.58 | 1045.05 | 17971 |
| 2013 | 6.97 | 1142.53 | 18397 |
| 2014 | 7.68 | 1282.80 | 19700 |
| 2015 | 8.03 | 1431.97 | 21013 |
| 2016 | 8.80 | 1615.39 | # 22923 |
| 2017 | 10.04 | 1657.55 | # 27310 |
| 2018 | 10.56 | 1853.79 | # 28586 |
| 2019 | 10.93 | 2321.98 | # 30058 |
| 2020 | 2.74 | 610.22 | # 6958 |

Note:#: Revised estimates

Source: Compiled by Authors from: (i) Bureau of Immigration, Government of India, 2020; (ii) Reserve Bank of India; (iii) Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, for 2016-2020; (iv) State/ Union Territory Tourism Departments.

The Changing Landscape and 'Atithi Devo Bhava'

The Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Government of India launched a social awareness campaign in 2005, 'Atithi Devo Bhava' which means 'Guest is like our God'. The very purpose of the drive is to extend and ensure good behaviour towards the tourists and make their stay and visit happy and further to motivate the members of the community to demonstrate generous behaviour during visitor's stay. Hence, *Atithi Devo Bhava*, in a real sense, ensures to provide good experiences and to extend good behaviour towards the tourists and also to improve relationship between the hosts and the tourists. The campaign targets the general public while focusing mainly on the stakeholders of the tourism industry. The campaign provides training and orientation to police, immigration officers, drivers, guides and other personnel who interact directly with the tourists. The core agenda of the campaign is to make India a preferred tourist nation.



Tourism experience is very much influenced by the degree of acceptability by the residents and their cooperation during tourist stay. Ultimate focus of the drive is to make citizens more responsible in their approaches and behaviour in making the country proud. It is expected that our good behaviour and ownership will boost the tourism sector. Government with other stakeholders must possess the sense of ownership in providing a happy and congenial environment to the visitors during their stay.

SWAN Analysis for the Tourism Sector in India

Contribution of the tourism sector to the overall employment and livelihood itself signifies its importance in the development agenda. The government is committed to promote the tourism sector for its multiplier effect and multi-faceted boosting-up of the economy. A critical 'SWAN Analysis' (*S=Strengths, W=Weaknesses, A=Achievements and N=Next Steps*) of the tourism sector in India is done to assess and to suggest the needful interventions and improvement, (Box 1).

COVID-19 Pandemic and Tourism Sector

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism sector suffered a serious setback for which the global tourism industry got a serious hit of US\$ 4 trillion in terms of global GDP loss (2020 and 2021). As far as the tourism sector in India is concerned, it has been adversely affected in terms of its contribution to GDP and to direct and indirect employment, thus affecting millions of livelihoods. The whole world is reeling under pandemic-driven recession of its worst kind one can imagine, but India has the resilience and agility to bounce back, which is quite visible especially from August 2021. Although most of the socio-economic activities had slowed down earlier, they are picking-up life back in post-COVID-19 regime, especially in the tourism sector. This is certainly a welcome sign of development. As a consequence, whatever the adverse impact seen through poverty, inequality and joblessness in most parts of the world during COVID-19 (March 2020 to August 2021) is fading away.

Government Initiatives and Boosting the Tourism Sector

The Government of India and many state governments have launched various schemes to

overcome the losses and to boost the tourism sector. The government has taken a variety of measures to fight against the adverse effects of COVID-19, with ongoing 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav: India at 75 Years of Independence'. Among these schemes and initiatives, the government under the scheme of 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' has launched various schemes in support of tourism development that includes PRASHAD and Swadesh Darshan. These schemes are especially designed and customised to meet the requirements of the tourist and to promote tourism.

Swadesh Darshan is an initiative taken by the government to enrich the tourist experiences and to enhance opportunities and to promote lesser known destinations. National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) launched by the Ministry of Tourism with a special objective of holistic development of pilgrimage and heritage destinations. Through this drive, 57 sites are identified in 29 states and union territories; and the government has already spent Rs. 622.08 crores on the sanctioned 36 projects in 24 states to boost the tourism. Other schemes for tourism development include: Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development; Gap Scheme for Revenue Generating Tourism Projects; Capacity Building for Service Provider; Domestic Promotion and Publicity including Hospitality; Overseas Promotion and Publicity including Marketing Development Assistance; Champion Services Sector Scheme; Safe Tourist Destination for Women; and Development of Iconic Tourist Destination etc.

It is a well-known fact that the tourism activities primarily result in environmental and socio-cultural impact on the destinations to a large extent and every activity has an opportunity cost, which is true in respect to tourism as well. Hence, to minimise the adverse effects of tourism on the environment, the concept of 'Sustainable Tourism' has been initiated. Government has already started new-age tourism which includes niche tourism to attract inbound and domestic tourists. The very purpose of the creation of 'Sustainable Tourism' is a kind of shift from 'Seasonal Tourism' to '365 Days Tourism' and to meet the needs of the new customer segments with

Box 1: SWAN Analysis for the Tourism Sector in India

S = Strengths

- Both central and state governments have designed a variety of tourism schemes to promote the sector.
- Tourist destinations have rich variety and diversity i.e., nature, resorts, historical places, heritage sites, local/regional festivals, multi-cultural exchanges, etc.
- Variety of pricing offers available for all categories of customers (domestic and foreign).
- Majority of the tourist destinations across India have good facilities and amenities ... including transportation, accommodation, medical and shopping etc.
- Some tourist destinations are known for unique experiences and features e.g., Eco-tourism in North East States, Health Tourism in Kerala, Fun Tourism in Goa, Temple Tourism in South Indian states, etc.

W = Weaknesses

- Maintenance, cleanliness and hygiene are some of the continued challenges.
- Safety and security aspects are a matter of concern in some of the tourist destinations.
- With the advent of technology & accessibility of mobile internet, the information is available but some times, reliable/updated information is lacking on some tourist places, especially which are not part of mainstream tourist places.
- The variety and availability of non-spicy food for the foreign travellers is a challenge in some destinations.
- At times, the resident/local residents in tourist destinations exploit the tourists (by corruption, cheating, over-charging, unruly behaviour, etc.), thereby creating bad experiences and that is affecting the image of tourism in India.

A = Achievements

- India is land of diverse climate, weather and tourist destinations of all kinds — in all the seasons of the year (rare opportunity, unlike other countries having seasonal tourism).
- There is a tremendous progress achieved in attracting and promoting tourism in some destinations, where income of local people increases, employment enhances, local MSME and artisan businesses flourish etc. (e.g., Goa, Northeast, Kerala, etc.).
- The untapped potential in attracting and encouraging the planned tourism, especially for the foreign tourists by enabling greater and memorable experiences is on rise.
- Adequate opportunities have been utilised for nurturing the Eco-tourism like in Kerala, Northeast, Hilly/mountain areas, etc.
- Schemes like PRASHAD, Swadesh Darshan, and Niche Tourism are doing well and tourist services like e-visa are on rise and support services have been strengthened.

N = Next Steps

- There is a dire and urgent need to design 'Tourism as an Experience', rather than just a 'Service' of visiting places, food, stay, shopping, etc.
- The marketing, strategising and branding of some tourist destinations/places have to be under 'PPP (Public Private Partnership) Model' and exploitative nature of local residents to be addressed as a system.
- At times, the local/regional heritage is getting lost amid man-made tourist attractions. This must be addressed by treating it as a national heritage and lot can be done in this domain.
- In some places (though few), the local political tensions and/or terrorism/communal riots affect the tourists and hence that refrain them from visiting; hence media and PR management becomes crucially important.
- An integrated and holistic approach to be adopted by central and state governments, along with private players, so that the rich heritage and diverse culture is preserved, protected and nurtured.

Source: Compiled by authors from the published reports. Source for SWAN Analysis: Dr. Subhash Sharma, 'New Ideas in Strategic Thinking and Management' (2016).

distinct experiences. Niche tourism undertaken includes: cruise, adventure, wellness tourism, medical, golf and polo, film tourism, health tourism, heritage tourism, eco-tourism, rural tourism and sustainable tourism.

Niche tourism undertaken includes: cruise, adventure, wellness tourism, medical, golf and polo, film tourism, health tourism, heritage tourism, eco-tourism, rural tourism and sustainable tourism.

strengthen the tourism sector. People participation must be encouraged and should be done at the local level to make it more people-centric and participatory. The digital follow-up and connectivity networks at destinations must be strengthened further to address

The Way Forward

Tourists, whether domestic or international, look forward to the excellent infrastructure and high quality of hospitality services and more importantly the 'great quality experiences to be treasured for years'. Government is taking all kinds of measures for the development of this sector, however, it needs to re-formulate and re-energise the tourism policy keeping in view the altering priorities of the tourists in the post-COVID-19 scenario.

safety and security issues and to ensure quality experiences of the tourists. Although the tourism sector has been facing formidable challenges over the last 15-18 months, due to COVID-19, it has gathered positive momentum already. It is needless to mention that a structured and well-planned tourism development strategy by both central and state governments, along with private tourism industry stakeholders will certainly contribute in attaining sustainable tourism in India.

There is an urgent need to further strengthen the core infrastructures like airways, railways, roadways, and waterways etc., and also need to tighten the safety and security aspects so as to

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Development of Sports in Rural India

Rakesh Thapliyal

India has a rich heritage of indigenous sports, and it is priority for the Sports Ministry to preserve, promote and popularise these games. The best performance of Indian athletes in the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics has encouraged State Governments to announce the construction of new stadiums or training centers in the villages of medal winners. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is working hard to establish and improve the sports infrastructure and coaching facilities in rural areas, but there is a need to do more efforts in this direction.



There was a time when people all over the world used to recognise India with Mahatma Gandhi and with the game of hockey. Gandhi ji once said 'The soul of India lives in villages'. This is a true statement by the great leader which applies to Indian sports as well. If we look at the list of medal winners from the Tokyo Olympic Games 2020 and Paralympics 2020, we will find that most of them are from far-flung rural areas of the country, so without any hesitation, we can say that sports have deep roots in rural India. But, no one can deny the fact that there is a great need to establish a small but modern sports training infrastructure at panchayat and district level. Indian Tennis player Leander Paes, a bronze medalist of the Atlanta Olympics 1996, said, "I feel that 75-80 percent of all our talent is in the rural areas. I feel that to

create opportunities for these kids through sports is something that really excites me".

The best performance of Indian athletes in the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics has encouraged State Governments to announce the construction of new stadiums or training centers in the villages of medal winners. If we take the examples of Tokyo Olympic gold medalist, Javelin thrower, Neeraj Chopra and silver medal winner, Weightlifter, Mirabai Chanu, both of them are from rural backgrounds and during their early days forced to travel 15-20 odd kilometers for training because there was nothing such as a sports facility near their villages in Haryana and Manipur.

However, the emerging *New India* is different. Being a sport enthusiast, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has created a belief in the entire



nation that there will be no shortage of resources, that we can be world champions in sports and this is exactly what has happened. The Prime Minister regularly talks about sports and athletes in 'Mann Ki Baat' program. He has interacted with the athletes as well to encourage them.

To take sports to the next level, an Olympic Task Force of experts from their respective fields was formed. They suggested a roadmap to boost India's performance in Olympic Games. The sports fraternity is positive that India is now changing and showing its presence in the world arena.

In our country, sports is a state subject and the primary responsibility of the promotion of sports, including identifying young sportspersons and nurturing them to excel in national and international sports events, rests with state governments. Laws for sports are to be made by the States. The funding at the grassroots is done by the states. However, the Government of India supplements the efforts of state governments and National Sports Federations through its various sports promotional schemes.

Various sports federations are responsible for the development of sports and generation of funds. They are supported by the Government of India. The government also introduced programs 'Khelo India' and 'Target Olympic Podium Scheme'. In these schemes, government is covering the grassroots and elite sports from small villages to big metro cities. Today, every male and female athlete puts all of his or her efforts to be included in these two flagship schemes of the Central Government.

In an interaction with the Indian para-athletes before Tokyo Paralympic Games 2020, Shri Modi had said, "Looking at you, I can say that our villages and remote areas are full of talent and confidence. You are a living example of that. Many times, you would have thought about what would have happened to your dreams had you not got the facilities regarding resources. We also have to worry about the same concerns for the lakhs of the youth of the country. There are so many youth who can win so many medals. Today, the country itself is trying to reach them and special attention is being given to rural areas. Today, 360 Khelo India Centers have been set up in more than 250 districts of the country to identify talent at the

local level so that they get opportunities. In the days to come, the number of these centers will be increased to 1,000".

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has formulated several schemes to promote sports in the country, including in rural, tribal and backward areas. Some of the schemes are as follows:

- (i) Khelo India Scheme
- (ii) Assistance to National Sports Federations;
- (iii) Special Awards to winners in international sports events and their coaches;
- (iv) National Sports Awards, Pension to Meritorious sportspersons;
- (v) Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Sports Welfare Fund;
- (vi) National Sports Development Fund; and
- (vii) Running sports training centers through Sports Authority of India. The majority of the sportspersons benefitting from these schemes belong to the rural, backward, tribal and women population of the country and are provided with regular training on a residential and non-residential basis as per the approved norms of the schemes.

Under the Khelo India Scheme, talent search has been started at the grassroots level in two categories: (i) Sports potential talent identification (ii) Proven talent identification.

Further, India is divided into five zones namely North, East, West, South and North-East Zones to carry out talent identification. Grassroot Zonal Talent Identification Committees are formed to reach out to every corner of the country to shortlist potential and proven athletes. Talent Identification is carried out in twenty sports disciplines in the age group of 8 to 14 years, wherein the country has the potential /advantage to excel at the international level.

Under the 'Talent Search and Development' vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, Khelo India Athletes identified and selected under the scheme are provided annual financial assistance of Rs. 6.28 lakh per athlete per annum which includes Rs. 1.20 lakh per annum as Out of Pocket Allowance and Rs. 5.08 lakh for other facilities like coaching, sports science support, diet, equipment, consumables, insurance charges, etc. Further, each Khelo India Centre notified under the Scheme at district levels in various States/Union Territories are eligible to receive Rs. 5 lakh per discipline as a one-time grant and Rs. 5 lakh per discipline as a recurring grant.

Under the “Support to National/Regional/State Sports Academics” vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, sports academies are accredited for the training of the Khelo India Athletes. Accreditation of academies is an ongoing process and sports academies are accredited upon receiving expressions of interest from the State/Union Territory governments after following the due process under the Khelo India Scheme. 236 sports academies have so far been accredited across the country. Further, under the “State Level Khelo India Centre” vertical of the Khelo India scheme, the Ministry has decided to establish 1000 Khelo India Centres across the country, out of which 360 Khelo India Centres have already been notified.

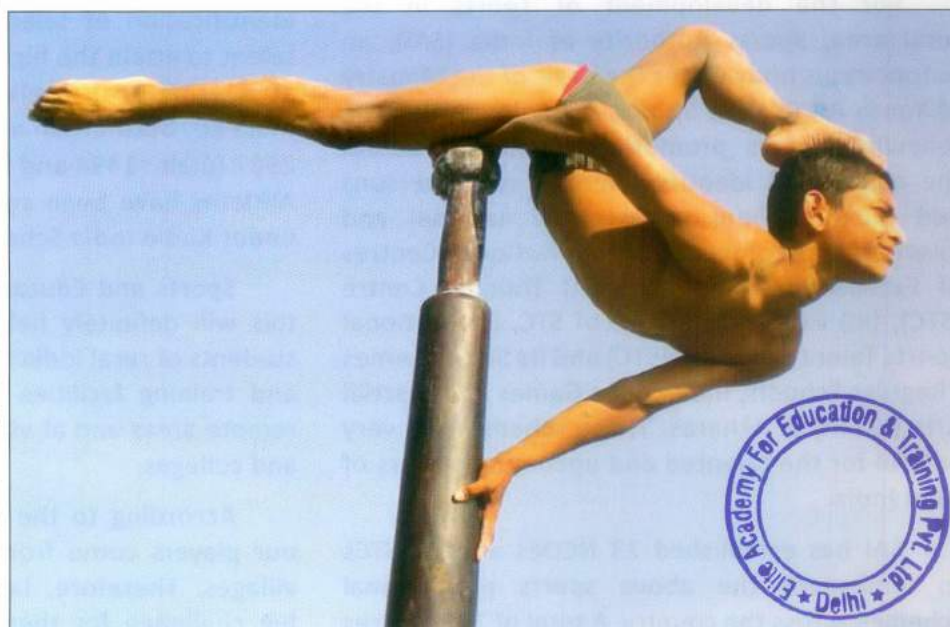
The Central Government also provides financial assistance under its scheme of ‘Khelo India’ to States/UTs to develop critical sports infrastructure and other infrastructure, where there are gaps, including for sports science and sports equipment based on viable proposals from them. The coordination between States and Central Government is the best in the history of Indian sports.

In September this year, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur virtually interacted with Sports Ministers of various States and Union Territories across India to draw the roadmap to prepare the athletes for the future Olympics, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games. During the discussion, the Minister asked the States and UTs to send their feedback on making a common pool of cash awards for the athletes where both the central and the state governments can accumulate the funds so that players of all states will get equal benefits after winning medals. The overall motive of the interaction was to urge them to organise sporting events across rural and urban areas for able-bodied and para-athletes as well as play a key role in the identification of talents at the grassroots level.

At present, there are 24 KISCES across 23 States and UTs while 360 KICs have been sanctioned across various districts in the country. States have been requested to contribute to their full capacity in giving the future champions of India all the crucial amenities including the best coaching, infrastructure, medical facilities etc. The Fit India movement has been a game-changer in inculcating the habit of fitness through various campaigns conducted thereon, like the Fit India Freedom Run, the Fit India Mobile App, Fit India Quiz, etc.

The States and UTs have been urged to send proposals to open up KISCES, KICs as well as academies to further the cause of strengthening the sports ecosystem of the nation. For the last seven years, the Sports Ministry, under the able guidance of the Prime Minister, worked towards creating sports facilities in all the villages. The Central Government and many states have decided to start sports universities that will produce world-class athletes and also educate athletes in different fields of sports. The Union Sports Ministry has started creating sports facilities in Jammu and Kashmir, Leh-Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh in a big way.

Central Government has earmarked an amount of Rs. 200 crore under PM Development Plan for the development of playfields and indoor stadiums in the whole UT of Jammu and Kashmir. 40 centers are approved under the Khelo India scheme in the UT in which necessary training





will be given to the youth as per their talent and interest in particular sports besides various sports programs are in pipeline to provide scientific training to the sportspersons. There will be one highly equipped indoor stadium in each district of Jammu and Kashmir. Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports recently visited Jammu and Kashmir, Leh Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. He also e-inaugurated three highly equipped indoor stadiums in Budgam, Pulwama and Anantnag. Sports facilities in these stadiums will run 365 days without getting affected by weather or other disruptions. The government is going to start procedures for the upgradation and renovation of all existing sports infrastructure at par with international standards.

In states like Uttar Pradesh, efforts have been made by the State Government at the grassroots level to promote the sports culture in the state. To give access to the sports facilities to the rural-dwellers, the state government has also decided to construct a playground in every village and open a gym at every Gram Panchayat level. The Chief Minister has also announced that taking forward the motto of 'Khelo India Khelo', the state government will adopt two sports and finance their promotion in the state for the next ten years. Of the two sports to be adopted by Uttar Pradesh, one will be wrestling. The second one for adoption will be selected soon by the sports department.

For the development of sports in the rural area, Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous body under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, is implementing the following sports promotional schemes across the country to identify talented sportspersons and nurture them to excel at national and international competitions: (i) National Centres of Excellence (NCOE), (ii) SAI Training Centre (STC), (iii) Extension Centre of STC, (iv) National Sports Talent Contest (NSTC) and its Sub-Schemes - Regular Schools, Indigenous Games and Martial Arts (IGMA) & Akharas. These schemes are very helpful for the talented and upcoming players of rural India.

SAI has established 23 NCOEs and 67 STCs to implement the above sports promotional schemes across the country. A total of 189 centres

including NCOEs, STCs, Extension Center, etc. are functional for implementation of the above sports promotional schemes of SAI. Around 9025 athletes (5,579 boys and 3,446 girls) are being trained in these Centres.

Under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), the Government of India provides assistance to India's top athletes in their preparations for Olympic and Paralympic Games. Selected athletes are supported with funding from the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) for customised training and other support not available under normal schemes of the Ministry. Out of pocket allowance (OPA) is paid Rs. 50,000 per month to Core group athletes. Apart from OPA, the entire expenditure for the training plan submitted by the sportsperson, which is considered and approved by Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) is met under TOPS. At present, 147 individual athletes and two hockey teams (Men and Women) as core groups have been selected under the scheme. Also, Under Development Group to ensure a focused approach in India's Olympic preparation, the talent identification of 258 best sporting talents has been completed for 12 sports disciplines. TOPS Development Group athletes are receiving an OPA of Rs. 25,000 and customised training support at the National Centre of Excellence (NCOE). Apart from the above, the Government has launched the Khelo India Scheme in 2017 with a mandate for the identification of talent and nurturing sporting talent to attain the highest levels of achievement at international levels. The Scheme covers pan India i.e. both urban and rural areas. At present, 2967 (male: 1494 and females: 1473) Khelo India Athletes have been selected on Pan India basis under Khelo India Scheme.

Sports and Education will run together and this will definitely help, in a great way, to the students of rural India as the sports infrastructure and training facilities will improve even in the remote areas and at village level in all the school and colleges.

According to the Prime Minister, "Most of our players come from small towns, cities and villages. Therefore, lack of exposure is also a big challenge for them. Sometimes, challenges

Sports Ministry encouraging Indigenous Games: Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta and Mallakhamba, along with Yogasana

The Sports Ministry is also encouraging indigenous games by supporting them. It has approved the inclusion of four Indigenous Games to be a part of Khelo India Youth Games 2021, scheduled to take place in Haryana. The games include: Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta and Mallakhamba along with Yogasana.

India has a rich heritage of indigenous sports, and it is priority for the Sports Ministry to preserve, promote and popularise these games. There is no better platform than the Khelo India Games where athletes of these games can compete. The games have huge popularity and are telecast across the country by Star Sports. The Sports Ministry is confident that in the 2021 Khelo India Youth Games these four disciplines, along with Yogasana, will get their much-deserved attention among sports enthusiasts and youth of the country. There is no doubt that in the coming years more indigenous sports will be added to the Khelo India Games.



The four selected games represent different parts of the country. Kalaripayattu has its origin from Kerala and has practitioners all over the world; Bollywood actor Vidyut Jammwal being one. Mallakhamba, meanwhile, has been well-known across India and Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have been the hotspots of this sport. Indian ancient martial art Gatka originates from the State of Punjab and this traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defense as well as a sport. This effort of Khelo India will certainly help to promote and revive a forgotten Indian traditional martial art having a historical significance.

Thang-Ta, a Manipuri martial art has passed into oblivion in recent decades, but the sport will reinvigorate again with the help of the Khelo India Youth Games 2021.

The Thang-Ta Federation also confirmed that the competition will vastly popularise the sport. Over 400 athletes from different states will participate in the competition. They want to be very successful in the competition and this will help them get more recognition nationally and internationally”.

like new places, new people and international conditions lower our morale. Therefore, it was decided that our players should get training in this direction as well”.

If the country has to reach the top in sports, then we have to shed that old fear which was entrenched in the mind of the older generation. If a child is more interested in the game, then the family members used to worry about what he would do in the future because barring one or two sporting

events, sports was no longer a measure of success or career for us. It is very important for us to come out of this mindset and the feeling of insecurity”.

No doubt the Union Sports Ministry is working hard to establish and improve the sports infrastructure and coaching facilities in rural areas, but we still have a long way to go.

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Boosting Rural Sports Infrastructure

Sandip Das

With the government's focus on building grassroots sports infrastructure through holistic approach of popularising sports amongst youth as well as achieving excellence in sports through Khelo India: National Programme for Development of Sports is gradually yielding results. Recent success in Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics is testimony to the positive impact of the government's thrust on creating sports infrastructure at grassroots.

In the recently concluded Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics 2020, India's performance has been quite encouraging and noteworthy. Besides the historic maiden gold medal in athletics by Neeraj Chopra in Javelin throw, Shooter Avani Lekhara became the first woman to win two medals at the Paralympics. With India winning seven medals in Olympics and 19 medals in Paralympics, it has been a special moment for India and lakhs of aspiring sportspersons. Sports has been less favoured career prospect for most Indians, but Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics have paved the way for lakhs of aspiring sportspersons.

The credible performance in Olympics and Paralympics can be attributed to the role of the Paralympic Committee of India, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) and collaborations with state governments in augmenting sports infrastructure and training facilities especially in the rural areas. In addition, MYAS launched the Target Olympic Podium Scheme in 2014 with an aim to realise India's Olympics medal dreams at Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020. The scheme provides financial and other support to top athletes in the country to help them reach the podium at the Olympics.

As per the constitutional provisions, the promotion of 'Sports' falls on the State subject list, which implies that the responsibility for the development and creation of sports infrastructure lies with the States and Union Territories. The role of the central government is to support States and UTs in building infrastructure for promotion of sports amongst youth.

MYAS supplements their efforts in this regard by providing financial assistance for promotion



of sports activities through National Sports Federations, training in Sports Authority of India (SAI) Centres, support under Khelo India Scheme and for youth activities in the country through its organisations namely Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme.

For boosting sports infrastructure especially in the rural, tribal and remote areas in the country, the MYAS is at present implementing various schemes. The schemes include Khelo India Scheme, Assistance to National Sports Federations, special awards to winners in International sports events and their coaches, National Sports Awards, Pension to meritorious sportspersons, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Sports Welfare Fund, National Sports Development Fund and running sports training centres through Sports Authority of India.

Periodically after receiving the proposals under various sports promotion programmes from the States and UTs, the MYAS sanctions funds to create infrastructure for programmes according to the parameters of the respective Schemes subject to the completeness of the proposals, technical feasibility and availability of funds under the Schemes.



During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a renewed thrust on use of technology to impart training to athletes at the grassroots. This is evident from the use of digital platforms for imparting online training to coaches and also to athletes, Khelo India e-Pathshala programme has been introduced by the SAI wherein the eminent athletes and senior coaches teach different modules in 21 disciplines to improve the technical skills of the athletes at grassroots level.

The majority of the sportspersons benefitting from these Schemes hail from the rural, backward, tribal and women population of the country and are provided with periodic training on residential and non-residential basis as per the approved norms of the Schemes.

In 2017, for promoting mass participation in sports and achieve effective implementation, the earlier schemes of Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA), Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme (USIS) and National Sports Talent Search Scheme (NSTSS) were merged into a single scheme to be named as 'Khelo India: National Programme for Development of Sports'. Khelo India drew inspiration from *Khel Mahakumbh* - an annual event organised annually by the Government of Gujarat. Under the Khelo India programme, one of the verticals, namely, 'Promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games' is dedicated to development of rural and indigenous and tribal games in the country.

Under the 'Promotion of rural and indigenous or tribal games' vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, *Mallakhamb, Kalaripayattu, Gatka* and *Thang-Ta* have been receiving support. Grants have been provided for infrastructure development, equipment support, appointment of coaches, training of coaches and scholarships.

The four selected games represent various regions of the country. *Kalaripayattu* has its origin from Kerala which is practiced across globe and *Mallakhamba*, practiced mostly in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. *Gatka* originates from Punjab, and this traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defence as well as a sport. *Thang-Ta* is a Manipuri marital art. These sports will get national recognition again with the help of the Khelo India Youth Games 2021.

Khelo India Scheme is an umbrella scheme which aims at achieving the twin objective of broad- basing of sports and achieving excellence in sports, which in turn will infuse sports culture in the country, thus allowing the population to derive

benefits that sports offers through its cross-cutting influence; namely, holistic development of children and community development, gender equality, national integration and nation building, healthy lifestyle, national pride and economic opportunities related to sports development.

Khelo India has been divided into twelve verticals or themes – Play Field Development, Community Coaching Development, State Level Khelo India Centres, Annual Sports Competition, Talent Search and Development, Utilisation and Creation/Upgradation of sports infrastructure, Physical fitness of school children, Sports for Women, Promotion of sports amongst people with disabilities, Sports for Peace and Development and Promotion of rural and indigenous /tribal games. The MYAS, SAI and Lakshmi Bai National Institute of Physical Education are entrusted with the responsibility of implementation of various verticals of the Scheme.

In the union budget (2021-22), Rs. 657.71 crore has been allocated for Khelo India Scheme as per the Budget Estimates. This allocation includes funds for the purpose of development of sports infrastructure in the country. For attaining the goal of 'Creating World Class Sports Infrastructure' approximately 65 percent of the total outlay of the Khelo India Scheme is reserved for creation and upgradation of sports infrastructure. According to the eight report of Parliamentary Committee on estimates, the review of performance of the Khelo India Scheme (2020-21) - the budget allocation for the Scheme was Rs 1,756 crore for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20.

During 2018-19 – 2020-21, the MYAS has sanctioned 189 sports infrastructure projects, 360 Khelo India Centres (KICs), 24 Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCE) and 160 Khelo India Academies for promotion and development of sports in the country. MYAS also is currently promoting sports in 13 states which include Left Wing Extremism areas, Jammu and Kashmir and North Eastern states. The MYAS has decided to extend the Khelo India programme from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

The Khelo India Games, which was organised for the first time in 2018, has been a major game-changer for grassroots level sports competitions in India. Since then, a host of Khelo India Games have been hosted, including the Youth, University and Winter Games. The Khelo India program has



also encompassed the upgradation of several sports infrastructures across the States and Union Territories. KISCE and KICs.

The country has been divided into five zones namely North, East, West, South and North-East Zones to carry out talent identification. Grassroot Zonal Talent Identification Committees are formed to reach out to each and every corner of the country to shortlist the potential and proven athletes in 20 sports disciplines. Under the 'Talent Search and Development' vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, Khelo India Athletes identified and selected under the scheme are provided annual financial assistance of Rs. 6.28 lakh per athlete per annum. Further, each Khelo India Centre notified under the Scheme at district levels in various States/Union Territories are eligible to receive Rs. 5 lakh per discipline as one-time grant and Rs. 5 lakh per discipline as recurring grant.

Under the 'Support to National, Regional, State Sports Academies' vertical of the Khelo India Scheme, sports academies are provided accreditation for the training of the Khelo India Athletes. Accreditation of academies is an ongoing process and sports academies are provided accreditation based on expressions of interest from the state and union territory governments after following the due process under the Khelo India Scheme.

The positive impact of boosting India's sport infrastructure at the grassroots has started to yield results. With the thrust on creating additional sports infrastructures at the grassroots, it is expected to result in India emerging as a major sporting power house in the next decades.

Several infrastructure projects under Khelo India have been created across states. As many as eight sports infrastructure projects have been sanctioned while 11 projects have been taken up in Bihar under the Khelo India Scheme. In order to promote sports talent in rural Uttar Pradesh and hone the skills of players, the state government has initiated rural sports events in all 75 districts and set up mini stadiums in the rural areas. As many as 20 mini stadiums are being constructed in the state. Two infrastructure projects for upgradation of Hockey and Football grounds along with construction of multipurpose indoor hall with 12 courts halls have been taken up in Jharkhand. Construction and laying of synthetic athletic track at SAI Training Centre at Gujarat have been taken up under Khelo India scheme.

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a renewed thrust on use of technology to impart training to athletes at the grassroots. This is evident from the use of digital platforms for imparting online training to coaches and also to athletes, Khelo India e-Pathshala programme has been introduced by the SAI wherein the eminent athletes and senior coaches teach different modules in 21 disciplines to improve the technical skills of the grassroots level athletes.

The eighth report of Parliamentary Committee on estimates on the review of performance of the Khelo India Scheme (2020-21) has recommended that the government should substantially invest commensurately in different sports and if needed, private sector may also be allowed to invest in the sports infrastructure and sportspersons by way of Corporate Social Responsibility.

Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi in a recent radio broadcast of 'MANN KI BAAT' said that the Tokyo Olympics have created a major impact, and India's achievements may not be a lot compared to some countries but are enough to bolster the people's belief. "Today, it is not that the youth is just watching sports...The youth is also looking at possibilities associated with sports... She or he now wants to surpass conventional ways and adopt new disciplines," Modi said while calling for creation of sports competitions at the village level.

The positive impact of boosting India's sport infrastructure at the grassroots has started to yield results. With the thrust on creating additional sports infrastructures at the grassroots, it is expected to result in India emerging as a major sporting power house in the next decades.

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Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Towards Affordable Housing

Dr. Y. S. Shivay and Dr. Teekam Singh



Rural housing has been one of the top priority areas for the current government. The government has brought in Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana—Gramin, which is a revamped version of an earlier scheme in terms of design, fund flow mechanism, quality, and other implementation activities. PMAY-G is expected to have strong forward linkage with other sectors in the economy, the impact on employment and output can be through direct as well as indirect channels to strengthen the rural economy.

Affordable housing is generally considered to be the houses which meet the needs of households whose incomes and resources are not sufficient to allow them to access appropriate housing in the market. Decent housing has been universally accepted as one of the basic needs of individuals, the family and the environment. India is the second-most populous nation in the world and in this light the question of providing affordable housing for all becomes pertinent. The Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY) mission is aimed at addressing the core issue of the housing shortage throughout the country in an organised and planned manner. In the recent past, measures like the government providing land and giving out subsidies and incentives along with involvement of the private sector have acted as a catalyst in narrowing down the existing gap between demand and supply. Moreover, improved technical solutions have made it possible to maintain the cost-effectiveness of such projects without compromising on time, thereby, resulting in financially viable projects. One of the most commonly accepted definitions of affordability refers to housing affordability which is taken as a measure of expenditure on housing to income of the household. This is also accepted by the Government of India, which states "Affordable housing refers to any housing that meets some form of affordability criterion, which could be income level of the family, size of the dwelling unit or affordability in terms of Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI) size or ratio of house price to annual income". Affordable housing includes Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana

(PMAY) for rural and urban India. It includes in-situ rehabilitation of existing slum dwellers using land as a resource through private participation; credit linking subsidy for economically weaker sections (EWS) and low-income group (LIG); affordable housing in partnership with private or public sector including parastatal agencies; subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction/enhancement for individuals of EWS. PMAY is being implemented by providing central assistance to urban local bodies and other implementing agencies through states and union territories.



MODI GOVERNMENT PROVIDING HOUSES TO THE POOR AND NEEDY

PM Awas Yojana (Rural)

- Beneficiaries Over 2.17 crore**
- Houses sanctioned Over 2.05 crore**
- Houses built Over 1.6 crore**

Data till September 17, 2021*
Source: pmayg.nic.in
www.bjp.org

Everyone dreams to have roof over his head as it is one of the three basic human requirements besides food and clothing. Even after 74 years of independence, India is still grappling with the growing housing problems especially in rural areas. Housing, at one time was never an issue in the Indian context. The joint family system meant that there was one house for the entire family and all the family members lived in the family home. The trend of migration toward cities in search of job raised the issue of more than a house for a family. The advent of the nuclear family system further exacerbated the situation with parents and children living away from each other. In present situations, providing shelter for poor has been a colossal challenge for India, and the problem is more prominent in rural areas. Various international resolutions such as International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Change Rights; Vancouver Declaration on Human Resettlements, etc., have recognised adequate housing as a part of the right to an adequate standard of living. Though, the Indian Constitution does not directly guarantee the 'Right to Housing' but has addressed the importance of shelter through Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) and fundamental rights and duties that have a bearing on the right to adequate housing.

To address the issue of severe scarcity of houses for the rural poor and empowering them, the Government of India had launched various housing schemes (Table 1). Recognising the need and significance of easy access to housing for deprived is of utmost importance and to fulfil the objective of providing shelter to all, India, in June 1996, became a signatory to the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlement.

Affordable Housing Policy

Affordable housing (AH) is basically built by private players with government subsidies. The government is incentivising private players to build housing for the identified weaker section of the society. A large body of work on AH focuses on affordable private housing through a structure of subsidies and financing options, creating optimal supply-side along with favourable revenue measures. The government is focusing on creating viable social housing for at-risk population such as children, senior citizens, vulnerable populations and the disabled, and private developers and not-for-profits obtain a range of subsidies for providing AH. Subsidies for AH fall in the planning and land use regime or take the form of financial incentive mechanisms. In planning subsidies, AH developers



may be provided bonus development entitlements, concessions on development standards, reduced fees, or reduced regulatory compliance (and therefore costs of regulation through reduction of red-tape etc.). Private participation is encouraged in various ways: fees and density bonuses are provided.

Genesis of PMAY-G

The current government, in an effort to overhaul the program and for accomplishing its target of ‘Housing for All by 2022’, restructured and transformed the Indira Awaas Yojna (IAY) into Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana- Gramin (PMAY-G), for fulfilment of gaps identified in IAY as outlined in the report of “the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on Performance Audit on IAY” (CAG, 2014), and the report on “Unspent Balances and Flow of Fund Mechanism under Some Rural Development Schemes” (Bhanumurthy *et al.* 2015). The scheme is aimed at providing a pucca house with basic amenities such as piped drinking water, electricity connection, and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connection, by convergence of different schemes

and programmes run by the government, to all homeless and those households living in kutcha and dilapidated houses by 2022. The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), for proper and effective implementation of the programme and construction of quality houses, has issued general guidelines and housing designs. The beneficiaries are provided with the unit assistance of Rs. 1.20 lakh for plain areas and Rs. 1.30 lakh for the hilly, difficult, and Integrated Action Plan (IAP) areas, and the funds are transferred digitally directly to the account of the beneficiary from the single nodal account established at the state level. Apart from the unit assistance, they are provided with the option of availing institutional finance up to Rs. 70,000 and are entitled to 90-95 days of employment under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Rs. 12,000 for constructing toilets under Swachh Bharat Mission, etc. In addition to these benefits, the beneficiaries are endowed with a number of other support services such as training to masons and skill certification for the good quality construction of the houses, sourcing of construction material,

Table 1: Housing schemes of the Government of India since Independence

| S. No. | Housing Schemes | Launched in Year |
|--------|--|------------------|
| 1 | Integrated Subsidised Housing Scheme for Industrial Workers and Economically Weaker Sections | 1952 |
| 2 | Low Income Group Housing Scheme | 1954 |
| 3 | Subsidised Housing Scheme for Plantation Workers | 1956 |
| 4 | Middle Income Group Housing Scheme | 1959 |
| 5 | Rental Housing Scheme for State Government Employees | 1959 |
| 6 | Slum Clearance and Improvement Scheme | 1956 |
| 7 | Village Housing Projects Scheme | 1957 |
| 8 | Land Acquisition and Development Scheme | 1959 |
| 9 | Provision of House Sites of Houseless Workers in Rural Areas | 1971 |
| 10 | Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums | 1972 |
| 11 | Sites and Services Schemes | 1980 |
| 12 | Indira Awas Yojana | 1985 |
| 13 | Night Shelter Scheme for Pavement Dwellers | 1990 |
| 14 | National Slum Development Programme | 1996 |
| 15 | 2 Million Housing Programme | 1998 |
| 16 | Valmiki Ambedkar Malin Basti Awas Yojana | 2001 |
| 17 | Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana | 2001 |
| 18 | Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission | 2005 |
| 19 | Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (2009-10) | 2009 |
| 20 | Rajiv Awas Yojana | 2011 |
| 21 | Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Housing for All | 2015 |

(Source: Various reports of Government of India, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty alleviation and Ministry of Housing)

support to old and disabled beneficiaries in getting the house constructed, development and provision of house design topologies, etc.

With the aim of addressing gaps in rural housing and providing 'Housing for All by 2022', the earlier Indira Awas Yojana was restructured into PMAY-G w.e.f. from April 1, 2016. The restructured mission has two phases:

- Phase-I aimed at providing pucca houses to one crore households living in kutcha/dilapidated houses in FY 2017-19.
- Phase-II aims at providing coverage to 1.95 crore households in FY 2020-22, with an immediate target of completion of 60 lakh houses in FY 2019-20.

The guidelines issued by the MoRD affirms that for the construction of one crore houses under the PMAY-G by 2018-2019, the total allocation of Rs. 1,30,075 crore was sanctioned. The cost was shared between Government of India and State Governments in the ratio of 60:40 for general category states and 90:10 for special category states and IAP districts. The Government of India provides the full cost in respect of Union Territories (UTs). Unlike the minimum size of the house mentioned in IAY to be 20 square metres, the minimum size of the

PMAY-G house is increased, and it is estimated to be 25 square metres including a dedicated area for hygienic cooking. Furthermore, for PMAY-G to operate in a transparent manner, and to ensure quality and timely construction of the houses, monitoring of physical progress of the construction is done with the help of AwaasSoft at the level of both Government of India and by State/UT Government. National Technical Support Agency (NTSA) acts as the nodal agency to assist in facilitating the same. Various Governance reforms such as Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) through digital payments, e-monitoring through AwaasSoft, masons training, convergence, providing of housing typologies, and setting up of technical support agencies at State and Central level is expected to help in speedy completion of houses. This is also expected to create additional employment and income generation at rural level.

Selection of Beneficiary

One of the most important features of PMAY-G is the selection of beneficiary. Instead of selection a beneficiary from among the BPL households, beneficiaries are selected using housing deprivation parameters in the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011 data which is to be verified by the Gram Sabhas. The SECC data captures specific deprivation related



to housing among households. The households that are houseless and living in zero, one and two kutchra wall and kutchra roof houses can be segregated and targeted. The Permanent Wait List so generated also ensures that the states have ready list of households to be covered under the scheme in the coming years leading to better planning of implementation. In PMAY-G, programme implementation and monitoring are being carried out through an end-to-end e-Governance model Using AwaasSoft and AwaasApp. AwaasApp – a mobile application is used to monitor real time, evidence-based progress of house construction through date and time stamped and geo referenced photographs of the house. All payments to beneficiaries are transferred through DBT to beneficiary’s Bank/ Post office accounts registered in AwaasSoft MIS. The programme implementation is to be monitored not only electronically, but also through community participation (Social Audit), Members of Parliament (DISHA Committee), Central and State Government officials, National Level Monitors etc.

- Beneficiaries under PMAY-G will include all the houseless and households living in zero, one or two room houses with kutchra wall and kutchra roof as per SECC-2011 data.
- Priority will first be assigned on the basis of parameters reflecting housing deprivation in each category viz., SC/ST, minorities and others.

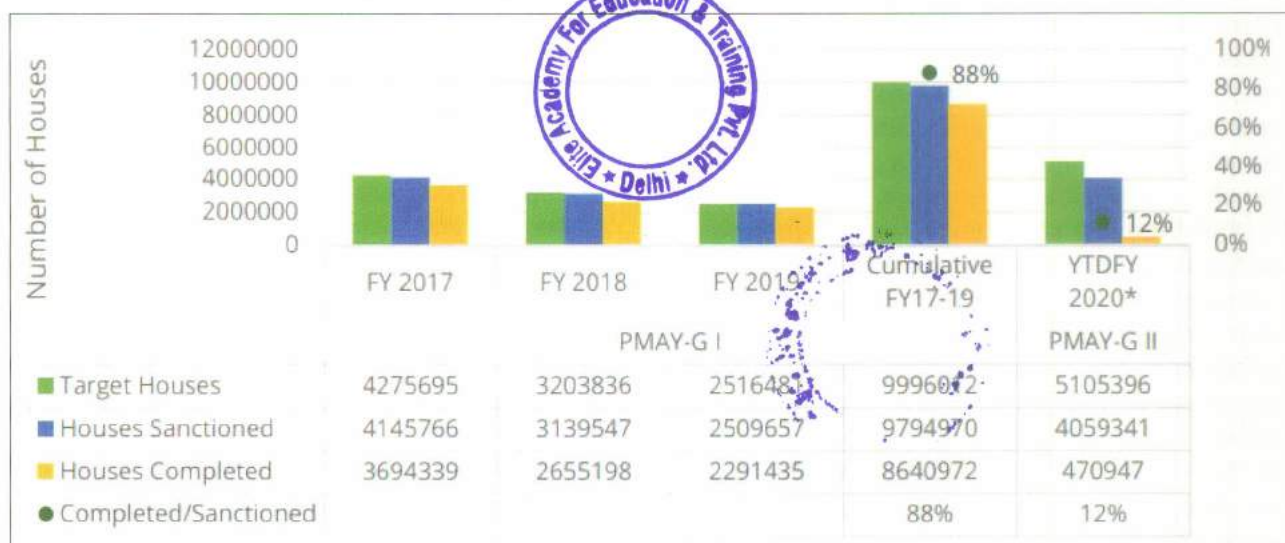
While the scheme aims at boosting home ownership and offers affordable housing options

to not just low income, but middle-income citizens as well, it is also attempting to promote ownership amongst female population and weaker sections of society. For example, the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) for EWS /LIG is given in name of female head or for a joint name between the male head and his wife. In case of MIG scheme, overriding preference is given to widows and single working women. In case of CLSS for EWS / LIG, preference would also be given to manual scavengers, transgenders and persons with disability. The scheme operates on the intention of lowering burden of building a house while at same time, offering this benefit to a larger section of the society.

Budget Allocation and Progress

For Phase-I of PMAY-G (FY 2017-19), the estimated total fund requirement stood at Rs. 1.3 lakh crore, of which Rs. 1.27 lakh crore (97%) was approved and Rs. 1.18 lakh crore (91%) was released. For PMAY-G Phase-II (FY 2020-22), assuming a unit assistance of Rs. 1.3 lakh, the total fund requirement towards the scheme would be Rs. 2.5 lakh crore. Total allocation (including central and state assistance) of Rs. 0.61 lakh crore (24%) has been made till date, with the Centre: State sharing of 62:38. A budgetary provision of only Rs. 0.19 lakh crore has been made thus far, possibly since it is the first year for Phase-II of the PMAY-G scheme. The progress of PMAY-G has been significantly better, with 88% of the sanctioned houses completed under Phase-I of the scheme due to better Central funding assistance (Figure 1). Sustaining the velocity in Phase-II will

Figure 1. Completion of houses under PMAY-G (ICRA 2020)





remain critical for achieving the stated target within the defined timeline.

Challenges and Potential of PMAY-G

Developing AH on a large scale is one of the greatest challenges in India today. It is vital that certain critical issues are addressed urgently to make AH a possibility. On the demand side, the critical issues include identification of the right clientele, increasing reach through micro mortgage financing mechanisms and self-help groups, and flexible paying mechanisms to cater to variable income flows. On the supply side, incentivising through policies (extra-floor space index, free sale areas and so on), schemes for slum redevelopment and rehabilitation, ensuring adequate availability of land, streamlining of land records, inclusion of mass housing zones in comprehensive development plans (CDPs), encouragement to private participation and partnership, and single window clearance for smaller projects on the lines of large township projects are necessary. Success in the AH segment demands management of project cost and timelines so as to prevent cost-time overruns. Inadequate infrastructure is a challenge. The State has a special responsibility to create an enabling environment for AH developers, not necessarily through subsidies but also by fast tracking approval processes, demystifying land laws, deconstructing the financing and land assembling processes, and through innovative mechanisms such as earmarking areas for development, encouraging

public private partnerships, and rethinking floor space index (FSI) limits.

Conclusion

Rural housing has been one of the top priority areas for the current government. The government has brought in Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana–Gramin, which is a revamped version of an earlier scheme in terms of design, fund flow mechanism, quality, and other implementation activities. The government has made PMAY-G an effective tool to create affordable housing by providing as many as financial support through various schemes and credit facilities to create basic needs in housing. PMAY-G is expected to have strong forward linkage with other sectors in the economy, the impact on employment and output can be through direct as well as indirect channels to strengthen rural economy.

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Revolutionising Sports Training through Technology

Kanika Verma and Mishika Nayyar

Sports in India currently stands at the cusp of a technological revolution. By capitalising on new-age technologies, we will not only be able to produce great athletes but will also bring sports closer to the people. India's stellar performance at the Tokyo Olympics 2020 has garnered global applause and a key to this success has come from investment in sports infrastructure and technology. The Government not only sees this as a way to produce better sportspersons but also sees the sports tech industry as a significant contributor to the economy.

Sports can be defined as all forms of physical activity usually competitive in nature, which through either casual or organised participation, provides entertainment to an audience or spectators with an aim to use, maintain or improve physical skills and abilities. Sports undercut our lives in a variety of ways- socially, culturally, physically, emotionally, nationally, commercially and even monetarily. People can associate to sports in various ways, whether it involves playing a certain sport or simply enjoying watching, analysing and supporting their favourite team. Sports cut across identities of gender, class and culture. It brings about a sense of unity between communities and is also a great mood buster and stress reliever. Sporting events like any other business are governed by strong emotions.

The history of sports in India dates back thousands of years starting from Indus valley

civilisation. The presence of seals and artifacts found from that era points to the fact that Indians played many forms of sports such as chess, dice, hunting and boxing. During the Vedic period, 'dehvada' also known as the body-way is defined as "one of the ways to full realisation". Additionally, India's ancient scriptures such as Mahabharata and Ramayana also point towards the presence of games such as dice in the Indian sub-continent. These ancient texts also bear testimony to the fact that men of stature and competence used to engage in sports such as chariot racing, archery, horsemanship, military tactics, wrestling, weightlifting, swimming, swordsmanship and hunting. In fact, sports such as swimming, running and ball games were popular amongst the students in ancient Indian universities such as Nalanda and Taxila.

India is one of the most critical emerging nations in the world, presenting many business





opportunities in the sports domain. While Indians follow popular sports like cricket and hockey with great fervour, several towns and villages continue to play more traditional sports. Many of these traditional sports are evolved versions of what is today the popular version of modern sports. Punjab hosts its own version of rural olympics called the Qila Raipur Sports Festival while Kerala is home to the graceful ancient martial art form of Kalaripayattu which focuses on perfect co-ordination between the body and mind. In the north-eastern state of Manipur, a form of rugby is played with coconut called Yubi Lakpi and from central India originates one of the oldest and extreme renditions of gymnastics called Mallakhamb. The state of Himachal Pradesh is home to a sport called Thoda which is a combination of paintball and archery and is rooted in the Indian epic of Mahabharata where serious battles were fought through the use of bow and arrow. The sport of wrestling was famous in the tribal region of what is now known as Nagaland and was used as a means to resolve conflict.

According to a report by GroupM ESP, the entertainment, esports and sports division of GroupM India, the Indian sports industry amounted to Rs. 5894 crore in 2020 with the biggest chunk of it being spent on media, which entails advertisement spending on Television (TV), digital and print media. The media sector accounted for 62 percent of the total spending contributing Rs. 3,657 crore. Overall cricket made up 87 percent of the total industry, contributing Rs. 5133 crore. The remaining 13 percent was contributed cumulatively by other sports.

The sports and fitness goods industry in India has also seen a major jump. Sports goods refer to the clothes and equipment required for participating in sports and preventing related injuries, while fitness goods are a subset of sports goods and are employed during workouts. These goods aid in maintaining the overall fitness; enhancing

flexibility and muscle strength and cardiovascular and pulmonary health of individuals. With the rise in incidence of lifestyle diseases such as obesity, diabetes, stroke, etc. and the growing awareness, the sports and fitness goods industry has seen a major spurt in its growth. Social media also acts as a catalyst for the emerging market. The Business Wire reports that the Indian sports and fitness goods market is poised to grow at a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.6 percent during 2021-2026.

While earlier the primary focus in sports was towards the team and the player, the focus has now shifted beyond the playing field. Today, the sporting industry also encapsulates other streams of revenues that may bring in millions in monetary

The sporting world has progressed from being just a leisure activity and now encompasses a huge ecosystem consisting of various stakeholders. The sporting industry is constantly growing and evolving with the introduction of cutting-edge technology, thereby revolutionising the way people experience sports. The intersection of sports and technology to track and understand human interest, trends and performances as well as help in enhancing the performance of the athlete is known as sports technology or sports tech.

terms such as memorabilia, stadium food, TV rights, sponsorships, media, etc. Sporting events and teams are now being regarded as business opportunities. Additionally, the industry not only supports direct sources of income but also promotes tourism, infrastructure, foreign investment and

innovations, creating a cascading effect down the value chain.

The sporting world has progressed from being just a leisure activity and now encompasses a huge ecosystem consisting of various stakeholders. The sporting industry is constantly growing and evolving with the introduction of cutting-edge technology, thereby revolutionising the way people experience sports. The intersection of sports and technology to track and understand human interest, trends and performances as well as help in enhancing the performance of the athlete is known as sports technology or sports tech. Sports Technology uses a combination of several new age technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Internet of Things (IoT), virtual and augmented reality, robotics, drones, digitalisation, etc, which has drastically helped in improving the overall sports landscape. Technology can be used at each stage in the sporting world like broadcasting, fan engagement, state-of-the-art equipment, live



performance tracking, etc. and have a significant impact on how athletes practice and compete by using solutions like biomechanical analyses, correct techniques, among other things.

Earlier, sports training required the use of extensive paperwork and post practise effort from both the trainers and athletes alike. While the practise was going on, the performance of an athlete was tracked using notes and graphs which were later collated and discussed in addition to any aches, pains and injuries. The system was time consuming and gruelling. However, with the rise of the use of advanced technology, the process has become less tiresome and more accurate. Digital technology is likely to play a critical role in the future of sports. In traditional sports, it is helpful to enhance athlete and team performances, the fan experiences (in-stadium as well as out-stadium) and attract new audiences (to stay competitive with other entertainment channels).

The use of technology through slow motion replays, database storage and retrieval, as well as comparison with others have helped players vastly improve their game by recording time speed, direction, swing, turn and bounce. This has helped players control their grip, release and speed. Every part of a player's body can be assessed and monitored during play for deriving maximum impact. For athlete and team performances, a combination of biological sciences and technology such as AI, ML and data analytics can be used to track real-time performance of players, generate reports on players performance, track body movement, position, speed, etc. tracking their real-time physical conditions such as heart rate, body temperatures, among other things, which along with their medical history records shall provide insights for any required action and generate insights on player's reactions or performances under specific conditions of weather, environment or stages of a game. For example, cyclists can wear Heads-Up Display (HUD) glasses that deliver information regarding heart rate, speed, incline and other relevant cycling information which can help the cyclist focus and make adjustments while riding. Swimmers and divers can also use sports technology to measure and observe technical metrics like rotational speed, dive angle, leg movement and hydrodynamics which help them improve and shave off precious milliseconds from their performance. Additionally, training

management software can also be used by trainers to help monitor diet, sleep, exercise, energy, etc., which also helps in preventing fatigue and injuries. Many sports persons also use sensors placed on their body or 'smart clothing' which can help in monitoring performance in real time.

These insights can be used to enhance the performance of players, prevent injuries, improve safety of the player and plan a game strategy. Additionally, opponent teams can also use these insights to prepare their counter strategy. Real-time data can be collected using sensors in the players' clothing, sport equipment, etc.

During practise sessions, players can use virtual reality and augmented reality to practice their moves or drills in a simulated match-like environment. This shall help them for match-practice irrespective of the space, people and weather constraints. These technologies shall also be helpful for referees to make correct and accurate decisions through enhanced viewing and access to real-time data.

Globally, there have been some major milestones in the evolution of sports technology that could be mapped. In the year 1991, Wimbledon debuted the IBM serve-speed technology followed by the Decision Review System (DRS), a technology-based decision-making system used in cricket in 2008. The Spider cam technology was released in 2010, which enables film and television cameras to move horizontally and vertically. In 2013, smart racquets were introduced with chips placed in the handle to record data on power and spin. The world of football saw an important innovation in 2014 with the goal-line technology, which was debuted during the 2014 World Cup to determine whether a goal has been scored. Further in 2016, sensors were introduced which were installed in players jersey to monitor health and aid in injury prevention, followed by smart chips for bats in 2017 to measure speed and angle for analysis purposes. Additionally, the Telestar 18 soccer ball with a Near Fields Communication (NFC) chip was released by Adidas during the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

While these milestones have been achieved globally, India is not far behind in this era of technology, where the tools of digital mapping, data analytics, machine intelligence and immersive viewing is spilling over to the arena of sports and



sports management. India's stellar performance at the Tokyo Olympics 2020 has garnered global applause and a key to this success has come from investment in sports infrastructure and technology. The Government not only sees this as a way to produce better sportspersons but also sees the sports tech industry as a significant contributor to the economy. The Government is actively encouraging private players to also enter this market.

Large companies such as Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Wipro, HCL are offering tech solutions to functionalities across the domain of sports, from tracking the fitness and sporting activities of players to managing and measuring audience engagement. Large companies as well as several start-ups in this domain have been able to establish partnerships with sporting giants such as Manchester United, Cricket Australia and the Association of Tennis Professionals.

In 2019, the Indian cricket Board, BCCI had onboarded the UK-based tech company STATSports to make use of their Global Positioning System (GPS)-driven performance tracking and analysis. The partnership witnessed a high-resolution unit embedded in the base layer vest of the players to monitor their workload. Sitting in a pocket between the shoulder blades, the device will measure hundreds of physical metrics of players, including distance, speed, acceleration, deceleration, high-speed running, and dynamic stress load. It would help in managing players' workloads, and injury rehabilitation programmes.

Looking at the start-up culture as a potential breeding ground for new possibilities in sports technology, there are several companies across India that have been able to make a mark in this upcoming field. For example, Bengaluru based sports-tech startup Stance Beam provides for real-time monitoring of players' training, as well as enables coaches to provide feedback remotely. The Stance Beam Connect platform enables real-time monitoring by giving students access to features such as recorded training videos, shadow practice sessions, swing metrics, etc., which the coaches can access and provide course correction real-time. This virtual training platform is set to transform and digitise cricket coaching during this pandemic.

To take another example, Criconet is an online platform launched by Selectronic India

in 2017, which is a live streaming and distant coaching platform that enables coaches to train players virtually. Taking advantage of the exposure to technology that allows remote processing, Criconet has designed a platform for e-coaching. The technology allows anyone across the country to access good coaches registered on the platform from their mobile and take personal one-on-one classes. The student and coach can share actual videos of games to pinpoint faults.

Sports in India currently stands at the cusp of a technological revolution. While sports technology is still nascent in India, it continues to show encouraging trends that has helped boost investors' confidence. For India, to become a sporting powerhouse, it is essential to leverage technologies such as AI, ML, and Big Data. By capitalising on new-age technologies, we will not only be able to produce great athletes but will also bring sports closer to the people.

According to a report by B2B research company Markets and Markets, the global sports technology market was valued at USD 17.9 billion in 2021 and is expected to reach USD 40.2 billion by 2026, growing at a CAGR of 17.5 percent. In the recent years, professional sports bodies have adopted new technologies such as sports data analytics, smart stadiums, wearable devices and digital signage to enhance their team performance, engage fans, and provide smart infrastructures taking the whole experience of sports to a different level.

In today's world, technology determines the sport, its rules, its creators and the athletes themselves. By adapting cutting edge technology in the field of biomechanics, data collection and data analysis for sports, countries like the USA, China and the UK have achieved much success in the global sporting arena and India is surely following suit by making critical progress. The government could also look at more ways to incentivise private players to invest in sports technology. This will not only help pushing up the level of sports in India but will also be a big boost to the sports industry in the subcontinent alongside revolutionising sports training through technology.

(The authors are researchers at Strategic Investment Research Unit of Invest India. Views expressed are personal)



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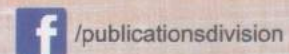
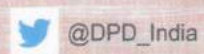
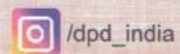
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