



Role of Sport in Aspirational India

This editorial is based on [“The pivotal role of sport in an aspirational India”](#) which was published in Hindustan Times on 27/11/2022. It talks about the importance of sport and why India should rethink its model of governing various disciplines.

For Prelims: Sports Governance in India, National Sports Development Code of India 2011, National Air Sport Policy 2022, Commonwealth Games, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan, Fit India Movement, National Sports Awards Scheme, Target Olympic Podium, Justice Lodha Committee, Gender Pay Parity, FIFA World Cup 2022, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science.

For Mains: History of Sports Governance in India, Current Challenges Related to the Sports Sector in India, Recent Government Initiatives Related to the Sports Sector.

A sound mind lies in a sound body. There is growing evidence that [sports](#) act as a catalyst for the development of personal and social skills among youngsters. The potential of sports to be considered as a career option gives rise to the question of its position and preference compared to other conventional career alternatives.

Pursuing sports as a career face numerous obstacles in India, including socioeconomic, linguistic, cultural, dietary habits, societal taboos, and gender bias that hinder a huge chunk of India’s young aspiring population to continue their passion for sports.

There is a need to reshape [sports governance in India](#) and look forwards towards democratisation of sports culture.

What is the History of Sports Governance in India?

- In the early **1950s**, the Federal Government created the **All India Council of Sports (AICS)** to apprehend the declining standards of sports in the country.
- In 1982, after Asian games, the **Department of Sports** was transformed into the **Department of Youth Affairs and Sports**.
- In 1984, the **National Sports Policy was initiated**.
- In 2000, the Department was converted into a **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS)**.
- In 2011, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports notified the **National Sports Development Code of India 2011**.
- In 2022, the Ministry of Civil Aviation launched **National Air Sport Policy 2022 (NASP 2022) for Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Ballooning, Drones, Hang gliding and powered hang gliding, Parachuting** etc.

What are the Current Challenges Related to the Sports Sector in India?

- **Lack of Parental Push:** In India **most families pressurise their children to outshine in academics** and work hard towards becoming an **Engineer, Doctors or successful entrepreneur**.
 - The underlying feeling is that **sports do not fetch a decent livelihood or make one wealthy**.
- **Social and Economic Inequalities:** Social and economic inequalities have a negative impact on Indian sport.
 - Denial of access to sports infrastructure **due to [poverty](#), concentration of stadiums and other sports avenues only in cities, lack of encouragement to girls to participate in sports**, etc, have **impaired the development of a positive sports culture** in the country.
- **Policy Lacunae:** For the development of any sector, **formulation and execution of an effective policy is a sine qua non**.
 - This is true for sports also. Till date, the **sports policy planning and implementation is centralised in the country** due to the paucity of resources, this has led to many incidents like **[IPL Spot Fixing](#), [Olympic Games bidding scam](#), [Sexual harassment incidents in women's hockey teams](#)**.
- **Corruption and Mismanagement of Sports Authorities:** Corruption has become synonymous with sports administration in India.
 - Whether it is the most popular cricket or hockey or weightlifting, most of the **sports authorities in India have come under attack due to [corruption](#) charges**.
 - Besides, the **involvement of politicians in the administration of sports bodies for a very long period and controversies surrounding the 2010 [Commonwealth Games](#)**, dented the image of sports administrators in India.
- **Use of Performance Enhancing Drugs:** Use of **performance enhancing drugs** is still a major problem in the sports sector. India ranks **first when it comes to [Anti-Doping Rule Violations](#)** or the World Anti-Doping Agency's Adverse Analytical Findings.
 - This problem still needs to be addressed effectively, despite the creation of the **National Anti Doping Agency** in the country.
- **Empty Playgrounds:** Modern technology and **video games have distracted children from playing physical games**. Today many children are on their mobile phones instead of playing with their friends on the playground.
 - Due to this the **young children are becoming susceptible to many diseases at an early age**, like **diabetes and hypertension**.

What are the Recent Government Initiatives Related to the Sports Sector?

- [Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan](#)
- [Fit India Movement](#)
- [Khelo India](#)
- SAI Training Centers Scheme
- Sports Talent Search Portal
- [National Sports Awards Scheme](#)
- [Target Olympic Podium](#)

What Should be the Way Forward?

- **Democratisation of Sports Culture:** There is a need to **revive India's sports culture at the grass-root level** by creating a **strong framework for sports governance in India**.
 - **Sport has historically taken a back seat in the Indian education system. A shift in school attitudes about sports has the potential to reshape the sporting landscape in India**.
 - The **Fit India Movement** mentions that the **schools are also allowed to include traditional and regional games in the curriculum** but making **sports a mandatory component of the curriculum** needs to be clarified.
- **Equal Push to All Sports:** It is high time the **public and private sector should come**

together to lift the Indian sport sector from the **present deplorable situation**.

- Extension of [Justice Lodha Committee](#) recommendations on BCCI to all other sports bodies will be a right step in this direction.
- **Promoting Gender Equality:** There is a need to **break down the stereotypes that continue to make women less likely to take up sporting activities**. It also means promoting women's advancement as professional athletes and **leaders in the sport sector**.
 - There is also a need to **close the gap in investment in women's sport and promote equal economic opportunities for women and girls**. BCCI's [Gender Pay Parity](#) initiative is a good step in this direction.
- **Filling Up Infrastructural Loopholes:** India must **invest heavily in building modern infrastructure with international best practices in sports training, sport medicine, research, and analysis** across all sports institutions in order to become a leading sports nation.
 - The quality of infrastructure can be scaled up to the village level and **regional centres should be made available for those who are serious at taking their sporting career to professional level**.
- **Ocean of Job Opportunities:** Sports are being revolutionised by new technological interventions like **Semi-Automated Offside Technology (SAOT), an artificial intelligence sensor getting used inside footballs in [FIFA World Cup 2022](#) games to detect offsides**.
 - There are many jobs being created via this technological revolution in sports, **especially in the field of [Artificial Intelligence](#) and [Data Science](#)**. This can benefit India's young demographic dividend.

Drishti Mains Question

Examine how sports are regulated in India and what are the major loopholes in India's sports governance.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q1. Consider the following statements in respect of the Laureus World Sports Award which was instituted in the year 2000: (2021)

1. American golfer Tiger Woods was the first winner of this award.
2. The award was received mostly by 'Formula One' players so far.
3. Roger Federer received this award the maximum number of times compared to others.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (c)

Q2. Consider the following statements in respect of the ICC World Test Championship: (2021)

1. The finalists were decided by the number of matches they won.
2. New Zealand was ranked ahead of England because it won more matches than England.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans : (d)

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