



38th National Games and Kalaripayattu

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Why in News?

The **Indian Kalaripayattu Federation** has accused the [Indian Olympics Association \(IOA\)](#) of downgrading the [Kalaripayattu](#) to the **demonstration section** of the event, **not the competitive section**.

- Demonstration events **showcase** sports for **promotion** and are excluded from the official medal tally.

What are Key Points about Kalaripayattu?

- **About:** It is one of the **oldest and most scientific** martial arts globally, originating in **Kerala**.
 - The warrior sage **Parasurama** is credited with establishing Kalaripayattu, which **Bodhidharma** (a Buddhist monk from South India) later introduced to China at the **Shaolin Temple in the 5th century AD**.
- **Philosophy:** The term "**Kalari**" in Malayalam refers to a **traditional gymnasium** where "**Payattu**" (**fight or exercise**) is taught.
 - It emphasizes **mind-body coordination** with techniques inspired by the attack and defense systems of eight animals i.e., **elephant, lion, boar, horse, snake, rooster, cat, and fish**.
- **Types:** Kalaripayattu has two types i.e.,
 - **Northern:** It focuses on **weapons and linear movements**, and
 - **Southern:** It emphasizes **multi-directional** movements with **fewer weapons**.
- **Stages of Training:**
 - **Maipayattu:** **Body conditioning** to prepare for combat.
 - **Kolthari:** Training with **wooden weapons** like short and long sticks.
 - **Angathari:** Introduction to **sharp metal weapons** after overcoming fear.
 - **Verumkai:** **Bare-hand fighting** focusing on anatomy for strategic strikes.
- **Current Context:** It was included as a competitive sport in the **37th National Games, Goa** but relegated to a **demonstration sport in the 38th National Games, Uttarakhand**.
 - Kalaripayattu athletes won **22 medals**, including 19 gold, in the 2023 National Games.

MARTIAL ART

Martial arts are traditional combat systems practiced for various purposes such as physical, mental, spiritual growth and self defence.

Huyen Langlon (Manipur)

- **Meaning:** Huyen (War) Langlon (Knowledge)
- **Components:** Thang-Ta (Armed Combat) and Sarit Sarak (Unarmed Fighting)
- **Weapons:** Thang (Sword) and Ta (Spear)

Lathi Khela (West Bengal)

- **Lathial:** Practitioner of Lathi Khela
- **Weapon:** Lathi (One of the world's oldest weapons)

Gatka (Punjab)

- Toned-down version of the deadlier **Shastar Vidya**.
 - Sharp swords (Shastar Vidya) replaced by Wooden Sticks and Shield (Gataka)
- **Role of Sikh Gurus:** 6th Sikh Guru Hargobind adopted it through 'Kirpan' for Self-Defense.
 - 10th Guru Gobind Singh made it compulsory for everyone
- **Weapons:** Sword and Sticks
- **Establishment of Gatka Federation of India:** 2018

Kalaripayattu (Kerala)

- **Feature:** This art form includes mock duels (armed and unarmed combat) and physical exercises.
 - Focuses on footwork
- **Kalari (Battlefield):** Place where this martial art is practiced
- **Weapon:** Strikes, Kicks

Mallakhamb (Madhya Pradesh & Maharashtra)

- **Feature:** A gymnast performs aerial yoga with a vertical wooden pole
- **Meaning:** Malla (Wrestler) Khamb (Pole)
- **Origin:** Indian subcontinent

Silambam (Tamil Nadu)

- Allows the use of a broad range of weapons
 - **Feature:** Incorporates tactics of animal motions (snake, tiger, and eagle)
 - **Created By:** Lord Muruga [Son of Lord Shiva (Kartekeya) and Sage Agasthya]
 - **Spread:** Tamil Nadu to Malaysia

Kathi Samu (Andhra Pradesh)

- **Weapons:** Various kinds of Swords
- **Garidi:** Location where Kathi Samu is performed
- **Stick Fight (Vairi):** Plays a significant part as a precursor to the real sword fight.

Paika Akhadha (Odisha)

- **Meaning:** Warrior School
- **Physical Activity:** Rhythmic gestures and weapons swung on the beat of the drum.

Pari Khanda (Bihar)

- This martial art forms the basis of Chhau dance (UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity)
 - **Meaning:** Pari (Shield) Khanda (Sword)
 - **Created By:** Rajput
 - **Weapons:** Sword and Shield

Thoda (Himachal Pradesh)

- Mixture of martial art, sport and culture
 - **Focus:** Skill of archery
 - **Performed on:** Baisakhi (13th and 14th April)
 - **Weapons:** Bows and Arrows
 - **Included Teams:** Pashis (Pandavas) Saathis (Kauravas)

NOTE

- Various **Indian martial arts** are now part of the routine training of regiments of the Army.
- The **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** inducted 4 indigenous martial art forms- **Kalaripayattu, Mallakhamb, Gatka and Thang-ta** into the **Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG)**.

What are Key Points About National Games 2025?

- **About:** The National Games of India is an **Olympic-style multi-sport event** where athletes from **states and Union Territories** compete for medals.
 - The **38th edition** of the National Games will take place from **28th January to 14th February 2025** in Uttarakhand.
- **Competition Structure:** The National Games will feature **32 sporting disciplines** for competitive events.
 - In addition, **four demonstration sports** will be included i.e., **Kalaripayattu, Yogasana, Mallakhambh, and Rafting**.
- **Theme and Tagline:** The mascot of the games is **Mouli**, inspired by **Uttarakhand's state bird, the Monal**, reflecting the region's natural beauty and cultural diversity.

- The tagline for the games is "**Sankalp Se Shikhar Tak**" (from resolution to zenith).



UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Consider the following pairs: (2018)

Tradition	State
1. Chapchar Kut festival—	Mizoram
2. Khongjom Parba ballad —	Manipur
3. Thang-Ta dance —	Sikkim

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (b)

Q. With reference to India's culture and tradition, what is 'Kalaripayattu'? (2014)

- (a)** It is an ancient Bhakti cult of Shaivism still prevalent in some parts of South India
- (b)** It is an ancient style bronze and brasswork still found in southern part of Coromandel area
- (c)** It is an ancient form of dance-drama and a living tradition in the northern part of Malabar
- (d)** It is an ancient martial art and a living tradition in some parts of South India

Ans: (d)

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