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Development of physical education and sport in British and post-Independence period in India

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Abstract

British ruled India for about 200 years and during this period physical activities and Military training lost their importance because the activities like sword fighting, dagger fight, spear fight etc. were banned by the British government and it resulted in degeneration of physical state of Indian people. Though British were magnificent sport loving people but as rulers in India they never paid any attention to physical education and sport. They used to organize some selected games after school hours but that was not enough.

With the achievement of independence in 1947, India made rapid progress in all aspects. Restricting ourselves to physical education and sport it may be said that for the development of Physical education, sports and recreation a number of schemes were introduced by Govt. of India.

Keywords: Cyclist, cycling speed, core strength

Introduction

During this period the western civilization influenced the Indian culture and as a result young generation kept themselves away from Akharas and Vyayamshalas. The main reasons for this change were:

- Activities introduced by the foreigners were more attractive.
- Games had more recreational values than Indigenous activities.
- The Western activities were of group type where more people could participate with lesser skill.

British ruled India for about 200 years and during this period physical activities and Military training lost their importance because the activities like sword fighting, dagger fight, spear fight etc. were banned by the British government and it resulted in degeneration of physical state of Indian people (Singh & others).

Though British were magnificent sport loving people but as rulers in India they never paid any attention to physical education and sport. They used to organise some selected games after school hours but that was not enough. For the first time, it was the Indian Education commission, which in 1882, recommended that "physical training be promoted in the interest of the youth by the encouragement of native games, gymnastics, drills and other exercises suited to each class of school." (Kamlesh M.L.2004) [5]. After this in 1894, the question of making physical education as a compulsory subject was considered but no definite policy was pursued further.

During British rule the organisation and the conduct of athletic activities and cricket were result of private efforts. German system of Gymnastics, Drills and calisthenics were introduced in schools but it was not much successful. The long Association of British people with Indians and their love towards sport resulted in promotion of team games like cricket, hockey and football. Most of the modern games and sport came to India via England.

Voluntary organisations like vyayam shalas, Krida-Mandals and Akharas contributed in the development of interest in physical activities like Dands, Baithaks, Yogic exercises, folk dancing, wrestling lathi exercises and indigenous games like Kho-Kho and Kabaddi. (Thysis, S. Santosh 1997) [7].

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In some of the public schools physical education was arranged as a compulsory subject but greater attention was paid to the Western type of games and sport like Track and field, swimming, horse riding, horse-polo, cycle polo and not to indigenous activities.

The organised scientific physical education came to India in 1920 when Mr. H.C. Buck founded the Y.M.C.A. College of physical education at Madras. This institution gave a firm foot hold to physical education in India. After this many more institutions of physical education were came into being like Government College of physical education Hyderabad in 1931, Christian College of physical education, Lucknow in 1932, Training institute of physical education Kandivali in 1938. Shree Hanuman Vayayam Prasark Mandal Amaravati founded by Vaidya Brothers in 1914, serves the cause of indigenous sport activities and started a five week summer course for young men and women and those who completed this course were awarded Vayayam Visharad. In 1945, at the time of All India physical education conference, National Association of physical education and recreation was formed. Y.M.C.A. introduced Basket Ball and Volleyball in India though these games were of American origin. The Akhil Maharashtra Sharirik Mandal standardised the rules of indigenous games like Kabaddi, Kho-Kho and Atya-Patya and then these were followed throughout India. (Khan, E.A.)

Post-Independence Developments

With the achievement of independence in 1947, India made rapid progress in all aspects. Restricting ourselves to physical education and sport it may be said that for the development of Physical education, sports and recreation a number of schemes were introduced by Govt. of India. In this process in 1948 the Govt. set up a physical education committee named 'Tara Chand committee.' This committee made several recommendations for the development of physical education and recreation which included the establishment of central institute of physical education and recreation. After this in 1950 a Central Advisory Board of physical education and recreation was set up to advice the Government on all matters related to physical education. The actual development process of sport started with the first Asian Games in 1951 which were held at Delhi as these games increase the participation of Indian Youth in Games and sports.

In the year 1953, the ministry of Health, initiated a National Coaching Scheme for Games and sports during the tenure of Smt. Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur. The objective of this scheme was to provide training to athletes in various Games and sports. As no qualified coaches were available at that time so the task of coaching was entrusted to those people who had made mark in their specialized sport. The players like Dhayan Chand and A.G. Ram Singh was working under this scheme and the scheme received wide popularity. Some foreign coaches were also hired on contract basis to do the job of coaching. Under Raj Kumari sports coaching scheme a number of short term coaching camps were organised for school and college students.

All India council of sports (1954)

In the year 1954 a meeting of the Presidents of various National sports federations/Associations was held under the chairmanship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and recommended the establishment of National sports council to promote sport in the country. National sports council acted as a liaison between the Government and the national federations for various sports.

This council also offered financial assistance to various sports federations. After this, under All India council of sports, state sports councils and District sports councils were formed.

National Plan of Physical Education and Recreation (1956)

To promote and popularize indigenous physical activities the plan was adopted by the union Education Ministry in 1956 on the advice and with the assistance of the Central Advisory Board of Physical education and Recreation. After reviewing the position of physical education, the national plan of physical education made recommendations on:

- The steps to be taken for the improvement of the status of physical education.
- A syllabi of physical education for boys and girls.
- The norms of physical efficiency test for boys and girls.
- Rules of recognition for the diploma and certificate courses in physical education.

In the light of the recommendations made by the board the union ministry of education took a number of steps like:

- Development of facilities for training of teachers in physical education.
- Institution of scholarships for research in physical education;
- Conduct of National Physical efficiency drive;
- Conduct of seminars on physical education
- Financial assistance to the colleges of physical education.
- Issuing directions to the state governments for effective organisation of physical education in state schools.

Laxmi Bai National College of Physical Education (1957)

In the year 1957 the ministry of education established a college of physical education at Gwalior offering three year degree course. Later on Master's Degree course of two year duration was also introduced. The college was named so in the memory of the famous Rani of Jhansi, the heroine of the first war of Indian independence. This was the only institute of physical education being run by Central Government.

Sports and Youth Welfare Department (1958)

In the year 1958 the ministry for education opened the department of Sports and Youth Welfare to promote physical education and sports in the country.

Adhoc Enquiry Committee on Games and Sports (1958-59)

Under the chairmanship of Maharaja of Patiala Shri Yadavinder Singh an Ad-hoc enquiry committee on games and sports was set up by the Government of India to find out the causes of debacle in sports performance. In first Asian games at Delhi India scored overall second position but after that in the next Asian games in 1954 at Manila India downgraded to fourth position and in 1958, Indian Hockey team lost gold medal to Pakistan. In view of this grave situation the National sports Federations, Indian Olympic Association and Government of India took serious note and set up this committee to suggest ways and means to improve the situation.

The committee made following recommendations:

- In physical education and sports the planning should be on long and short term basis.
- To produce good coaches and for the training of various teams a central sports institute should be established.

- All the coaching schemes should be integrated and their programmes should be rationalized so that maximum number of people could benefit from it.
- More attention should be paid to rural sports since the sports talent come from there.
- Better sports facilities and funds should be provided for educational institutions.
- The educational institutions should pay more attention to the nutritional status of the school children as a whole and sports talent as a special case.

Apart from this the committee gave emphasis on a new organizational set up for National sports Federations:

- All the National sports federations must be affiliated to Indian Olympic Association.
- An office bearer in National sports federation should not hold office in another similar organisation simultaneously.
- The term of office bearer should be restricted to three years with another term on optional basis.

National Physical Efficiency drive (1959-60)

In order to evaluate the physical fitness status of the people the national physical efficiency drive for men, women, boys and girls was started and sponsored by the ministry of Education in 1959. The purpose of drive was to create awareness and enthusiasm among the masses of the country for physical fitness. National physical efficiency tests were made to assess speed, strength, agility and endurance separately for men and women. The main features of this drive were:

- No Entry fee was charged;
- It was a national movement aiming to make people fitness conscious.
- Winners were awarded stars and certificates in accordance of their performance.
- The test was based on certain norms.
- It was a noncompetitive fitness campaign. The participants were not to compete against others but against themselves.
- The testing programme was conducted in co-operation with the state governments.

Kunzuru Committee (1959)

In the process of reforms Government of India appointed a co-ordination committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Hridya Nath Kunzuru. The main purpose of this committee was to examine the various schemes of physical education, recreation, character-building and discipline. After having detailed study of all the schemes the committee submitted a report in 1963. The committee made following recommendations.

- Recommended an integrated compulsory programme of basic curriculum at school stage for all.
- NCC should be encouraged at College Level.
- Scouts and girl guides should be encouraged.
- Recommended reorientation training for in service instructors.
- School children must put on smart uniforms.
- Extracurricular activities like song and dance campfires dramatics and plays should be encouraged.
- Youth hostels should be set up.
- Inter-varsity youth festival, Inter-varsity sports and Interstate sports competitions should be encouraged.
- Leadership should be developed in youth.

- National Anthem must be a regular feature in school.

Kaul Kapoor Committee (1960)

The Government of India deputed a two member committee comprising of Sh. M.K.Kaul and Sh. M.N. Kapoor for Rome Olympic Games held in 1960. The objective of this committee was to study organisation of sports and to observe structure and system of sports in nearby countries. In 1961 the following significant recommendations were made by the committee

- The physical education should be made an integral part of general education in schools and colleges.
- Play fields in schools and colleges should be developed.
- Outstanding sports persons in schools and colleges should be awarded scholarships.
- Sports and Recreational clubs should be established all over the country at district towns.

Netaji Subash National Institute of Sports (NSNIS 1961)

On the recommendations of the Ad-hoc inquiry committee in the year 1958 the institute was established at Moti bagh Palace, Patiala by the Government of India in 1961 to raise the standard of achievements in games and sports. The institute was set up with the basic objective of providing training to various teams and producing first rate coaches. Apart from training and coaching the institute also serves as a Centre for supplying information and providing technical personnel for games and sports.

Some of the important objectives entrusted to the institute were as follows:

- To produce good coaches;
- To provide training to various teams;
- To promote and carry research work in the field of sports.
- To conduct reorientation programmes for physical education teachers.
- To render assistance to various sports bodies in talent identification.
- To produce and publish popular literature on games and sports.
- To carry out the rural sports programmes of Government of India.

The management of the Institute was vested in the society for the National Institute of Physical Education and sports. In the year 1974 a southern coaching Centre was also established at Bangalore from 1st May, 1987 and the Sports Authority of India was the governing organization of the institute.

Integrated Scheme of National Discipline and Physical education and National fitness corps (1965)

In the year 1965 a new venture called as National fitness corps was set up. This was an amalgamation of Physical education National Discipline scheme and National Cadet Corps. Directorate of National fitness corps prepared a hand book of activity programmes for teachers. The state education secretaries and directors of public instruction met in New Delhi in February and April 1965 and decided to introduce this integrated scheme on a compulsory basis in all high and higher secondary schools in the country. The programme of the integrated scheme included the best of all essential features of various schemes in vogue in schools. The II-point programme of integrated scheme included:

(i) Exercise Tables (ii) Drill and Marching (iii) Lagium (iv) Track and field events (v) Games and Relays (vi) Gymnastics for Boys and Folk dances for girls. (vii) Simple combative

like wrestling, judo and zambia (viii) Hiking and cross country. (ix) Instruction and practice in Tests (x) Field craft (Boys), Home Nursing (Girls) (xi) General information, Practical projects and community singing.

In this scheme the emphasis was given on toughness of youth and qualities of leadership, discipline and loyalty. But as a matter of fact neither state declared National Fitness corps compulsory subject nor gave it a curricular status.

Rural Sports Tournament Scheme (1970-71)

In order to promote sport activities in rural areas of the country the Government of India in 1970-71 launched the rural sport Tournament scheme. The basic objective behind this scheme was that the natural talent must be identified and as most of the population of our country resides in rural area hence this major segment of the rural youth must be involved in sport.

Sports Talent search Scholarship Scheme (1970-71)

To enable the young promising and talented boys and girls and to develop their talent in sport the Government of India in 1970-71 introduced the sport Talent Search Scholarship scheme. This scheme provided National Level and state level scholarships. Besides, this an, another scheme was also implemented through university grant commission which aimed at improving sport standards among college and university youth. This was also in the form of awarding scholarship to talented players.

Asian Games (1982)

Asian games organised in New Delhi proved a great step towards the promotion of sport in India. The movement is run by the Government to make the games successful and made big contribution in encouraging the people to participate in sport. For hosting these games huge infrastructure was established, sports industries were built and these sports industries were encouraged to manufacture sport goods of top quality. As a result of these games the sports Authority of India was established in 1982 to look after, to maintain and to generate funds for the sports infrastructure. India won 13 gold medals in these games.

So in this way in the process of development of sport in our country, the last four decades have witnessed the rise and fall of many schemes of Physical education and sports. As discussed earlier the policies and schemes like National Discipline scheme, National fitness corps, National physical efficiency drive and National programme of fitness etc. were actually meant for mass consumption but the sport as a mass movement has remained an illusion only. For all the sport loving fraternity this is a heart searching question. Decidedly there has been something wrong with our policies and practices at school, College, university or training Institute level. Neither the general health oriented programmes nor excellence oriented schemes have yielded desirable results despite tremendous amount of inputs in terms of infrastructure, facilities, personnel and the like.

Sports Authority of India (1984)

With the objective of promotion of Games and sports in India the sports Authority of India (SAI) brought into existence by Government of India in 1984. It was an autonomous organisation under the overall control of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Youth Affairs and Sports. It was assigned the responsibility of maintaining and utilizing the existing infrastructure created for the IX

Asian games. Subsequently in order to adopt an integrated approach towards promotion and development of sports awareness (SNIPESS) Society for National Institutes of Physical education and sports (The controlling body of the NSNIS, Patiala and LNCPE, Gwalior) was merged with Sports Authority of India with effective from May 1987. The Headquarters of this apex organisation set up at New Delhi to:

- Look after development of sports in the country with several developmental schemes;
- Carry out sports programmes, policies and schemes of the Government of India, Ministry of sports;
- Run physical education and sport academy;
- Assist Indian Olympic Association and various National sports Federations in their organizational and national coaching programmes; and
- Run centers of sports excellence with direct control for upcoming sports persons.

National Sports Policy (1984, 2001&2007)

The main features of National sports policies were as follows

- The Central Government, in conjunction with the state Government, the Olympic Association (IOA) and the national sports federations will pursue the twin objectives of: "Broad-basing of sport and "Achieving Excellence in sports at the National and International Level.
- Sport activities, in which the country has potential need to be vigorously promoted for achieving excellence in sports at National and International level.
- Broad-basing of sport will primarily remain a responsibility of the state governments; the union Government will actively supplement their efforts.
- The union Government, Sports Authority of India (SAI), Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the National Sports federation (NSF) will focus specific attention on the objective of achieving excellence at the National and International Levels.
- Efforts will be made to promote and encourage women's participation in sport.
- The union Government, NSF, IOA, and SAI will Endeavour to promote a "Club culture" for the speedier development of sport in the country.
- Specialized sports schools will be set up and an appropriate Inter-School, Inter- College, Inter-university competition structure would be introduced at National, State and District Levels.
- For the development and Broad-basing of sports, availability of adequate sports facilities throughout the country is basic requirement hence the sports agencies like, Panchayati Raj institutions, Local bodies, educational institutions, Sports federations/Associations, Clubs and Industrial undertaking will be enlisted in creation, utilization and proper maintenance of the sports infrastructure.
- Keeping in view the importance of National championships in the development of competitive spirit and talent-scouting it would be incumbent on the Federations /Associations to hold Annual championships in various disciplines in all categories viz, seniors, Juniors and Sub Juniors (For both men & Women) at the District State and National Levels.
- Effective participation in International events especially the Olympics, Asian and common wealth Games, is a matter of National prestige hence long term Development Plants (LTDPs) would be prepared for each sports

discipline.

- Suitable measures will be initiated to ensure access to sports equipment of high quality and for these purpose eminent sports persons and federations may be extended exemption of customs duty.
- Concerted steps will be taken to train coaches, sports scientists, Judges, Referees and umpires and for this purpose promising persons would be deputed to seminars, workshops, conferences and courses abroad.
- Alongside sports persons, suitable incentives will be provided to coaches, Judges and Referees for developing skills and enriching their experience.
- Insufficiency of financial resources has been a major constraint in promoting sports hence efforts will be made to mobilize corporate funds for the development of sports.
- It may be recalled that a National sports development fund has been created with initial contribution from union Government. All contributions to this fund have been extended 100% exemption from Income Tax.
- The role of mass media is central to the popularization of sports amongst the people at large. The electronic media, including the National broad casters, the private channels and the Print media would be mobilized for strengthen a sports culture in the country.

Though every care was taken by the Government of India in preparing the sports policy document and involved all most all essential points which could raise the standard of sports in India but the ground reality is perhaps somehow different and it appears that policies are meant for papers only and as a result the country is still waiting to see its name on the upper half of the medal tally of Olympic games and other major International events.

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