



KHELO INDIA: A POSITIVELY AND SUSTAINABLY CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS CULTURE IN INDIA

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Abstract

India is a progressive country, in the last few years India has made a steady progress in the field of sports. Sport is an integral part of the culture of every nation. A physically fit and mentally healthy individual leads to an equally healthy society and strong nation. Sports are an extremely important area for the overall development of our society which builds a strong nation. To develop sporting culture in India at grass root level “khelo India” programme was introduced by the ministry of sports and youth affairs. So, central government merged three schemes (Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, Urban Infrastructure Scheme, and National Sports Talent Search) into one scheme “khelo india”. Its objective is to build a strong framework for all sports played in our country and promote “sports for Excellence” as well as “sports for all”. The purpose of these games is to find out best 1000 kids every year and they will be given an annual scholarship of five lakh rupees for eight years to prepare them for the international competitions. The aim of khelo India inspires young talent, give them top-notch infrastructure and train them at the highest level so that they can bring laurels to the country. It also aims to revive the sports culture in the country and establish a strong framework for all sports. The main aim of this scheme is focus on grass root sportsmen and to prepare them for international competitions like Olympic Games, Commonwealth games, Asian games. The goal is to positively influence the whole sports ecosystem, which includes sports economics, competitive structure, talent identification, coaching and infrastructures.

Key Words: *Khelo India, sports, culture, positively influence*

INTRODUCTION

Sport is an integral part of the culture of every nation. The role of games and sports in one's life are invaluable. Playing sports to keep one physically fit, mentally alert, socially well-adjusted and emotionally balanced, and also developed team spirit develops strategic & analytical thinking, leadership skills, goal setting and risk taking. A physically fit and mentally healthy individual leads to an equally healthy society and strong nation. Sports are an extremely important area for the overall development of our society which builds a strong nation. India is a progressive country, in the last few years India has made a steady progress in the field of sports. In Olympic Games (2021) India broke their previous best of six medals (London 2012) by finishing the Tokyo games with a record of seven medals (1 gold, 2 silver, 4 bronze). This tremendous potential needs to be showcased at a global platform. With this India earned 48th place in the total medal

standing. Then India realise its dream to becoming a sports super power. It's a time we inspire young talent, give them top-notch infrastructure and training of the highest level. We need to inculcate a strong spirit of participation in sports that enables players to demonstrate their true potential. Then to develop sporting culture in India at grass root level "khelo India" programme was introduced by the ministry of sports and youth affairs. Its objective is to build a strong framework for all sports played in our country and promote "sports for Excellence" as well as "sports for all". "Khelo India" is a Government of India programme launched in 2017-18 under the tenure Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sports Minister's Vijay Goel and Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore. Khelo India school games comes under khelo India programme. Khelo India school games inaugurated by Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi on 31 January 2018 at Indira Gandhi Arena, New Delhi. Khelo India school games now renamed as Khelo India Youth Games. Khelo India Youth Games are the national level multidisciplinary grass root games held annually. These games focus on two categories i.e under 17 years school students and under 21 college students. The purpose of these games is to find out best 1000 kids every year and they will be given an annual scholarship of five lakh rupees for eight years to prepare them for the international competitions. Under this Khelo India Scheme, govt. will provide training to the athletes and their coaches to raise their performance at the international level (Olympics). These games will be the best tournament organized at the school, college or university level. The central govt. had spent Rs. 1756 crore on this revamped Khelo India scheme for the period 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20. This program aims at mainstreaming sports for the development of individuals, community, and economy and thus promotes national development. This scheme will cover around 200 million children in the age group of 10-18 years. The Training of Trainers (TOT) Programme was held in December 2018- January 2019 in the first phase. Here total of 160 trainers will be trained in 4 batches of 40 each in December-January period. This TOT Programme will be carried out semi-annually or quarterly to include all the interested teachers, principals, vice-principals and physical education trainers. On 31 January 2018, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, inaugurated Khelo India School Games at the opening ceremony based on Guru-shishya tradition held at Indira Gandhi Arena. From the 2019 events, Khelo India School Games were renamed to Khelo India Youth Games after Indian Olympic Association came on board earlier in September 2018. The second edition of the event was kicked off in Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex, a sports complex situated in Balewadi, Pune, by Sports Minister, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, and, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis. On 27 February 2019, PM Narendra Modi launched the Khelo India App at the Youth Indian Parliament in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi to promote sports and fitness. On 22 February 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first edition of the Khelo India University Games in Cuttack to give athletes the exposure of multi-disciplinary events at the university level. The inaugural 2018 games had students competing for 209 gold medals across 17 sports. Badminton, basketball, boxing, cricket (26 gold medals), gymnastics (20 gold medals), judo (16 gold medals), kabaddi, volleyball and wrestling (30 gold medals) were held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium Complex. Athletics (36 gold medals), football, kho kho and weightlifting (16 gold medals) were held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. Swimming at the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Swimming Complex (35 gold medals), hockey at the Dhyan Chand National Stadium and shooting at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range were other venues. In December 2020 four indigenous games were added – Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta and Mallakhamba.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY:

After the China, India is the second largest populous country in the world. In India Youth represent the most dynamic and vibrant segment of the population. India is one of the youngest nations in the World, with about more than 50% of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35 years. If the youth participated in sports in high spirit then dreams comes true. At present, promotion and development of sports in the country is being carried out through following three schemes:

I. Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan: ‘Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan’ is a central sponsored scheme which was launched on 21st Feb, 2014. It has been launched in the place of former Panchayat Yuva Krida and Khel Abhiyan(PYKKA) which established 2008-2009 To provide infrastructure in rural areas and to encourage sporting culture in the country through competitions. Later in 2014 the central government revised it into the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyanin. In 2018 the Central Government has changed the name of the Rajiv Gandhi Sports Campaign Scheme to 'Khelo India'. Sports Minister Sarbananda Sonowal says that, there is a new thought in this name which will unite the country.

II. Urban Infrastructure Scheme - To provide quality sports infrastructure in urban areas so as to provide facilities for talent to hone their skills.

III. National Sports Talent Search – The National Sports Talent Search Scheme (NSTSS) has been formulated for talent identification in the age group of 8-12 years and nurturing of identified talented sports persons. The scheme is being implemented by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India. Identification of talented sportspersons in the age group of 8 – 12 years in schools all over the country through a battery of tests and nurturing of identified talented sportspersons in sports schools will help broaden the pool of sportspersons in the country. The Scheme will facilitate development of Indian sports, particularly rural sports. Any success in National/International sports events will bring honour to the country as well as to the respective States which the sportspersons represents.

ORIGIN OF THE SCHEME OF KHELO INDIA

Ministry of Finance on 28th October, 2015, had advised this Department to suitably Restructure the Centrally Sponsored Scheme into a Central Sector Scheme. On receipt of this advice from the Ministry of Finance, wide ranging consultations were held with State Governments throughout India by dividing the states into six zones, i.e., Northern, Central, Eastern, North Eastern, Southern and Western zones. After these consultations, consensus emerged that the above three schemes should be merged into one scheme –“ Khelo India” - National Programme for Development of Sports, which also draws inspiration in respect of organization of competitions from Khel Mahakumbh which is organized annually by Government of Gujarat. The programme takes care to develop sports infrastructure in both rural and urban areas and provides for not only identification of talent but guiding and nurturing of the talent through assistance to SAI Training Centres and Academies and State Government training centres/academies and setting up of new academies both in public and PPP Mode.

THE AIM OF KHELO INDIA

Khelo India Programme aims to harness the tremendous potential of the country in the field of sports, inspire young talent, give them top-notch infrastructure and train them at the highest level so that they can bring laurels to the country. It also aims to revive the sports culture in the country and establish a strong framework for all sports.

THE MOTTO OF KHELO INDIA

The Khelo India Youth Games motto is “**Kheloge Kudoge banoge Lajawaab**“.The headquarters of the Khelo India Games is located in Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Complex, Lodhi Road, Pragati Vihar, New Delhi.

NEED OF KHELO INDIA PROGRAMME

Increased youth participation

Increased the youth participation in sports the central government launched khelo India programme. This is talent search programme in grass root level. The inaugural Khelo India School Games in 2018 saw 3,764 participants. In the two subsequent years, the numbers increased up to 6,000 athletes from all across the country. As it stands, a total of 18,744 athletes have participated so far at the Khelo India initiative till now. In addition, the Khelo India Winter Games were launched with the aim to promote winter sports in the nation. Through Khelo India, more participation has successfully created a talent pool, from which promising athletes can be mentored for the future.

Building Excellence Centres across the country

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) has established 143 Khelo India district centres across seven states. The total budget allocated for this is over ₹14 cr. The initiative has emphasized imparting proper training for young athletes to help them develop their skills in their respective sports. Apart from this, the MYAS also launched eight Khelo India State Centers of Excellence (KISCE). They are located in Odisha, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Kerala. The centres are run by the respective state governments and will provide coaches and training facilities to young athletes.

Best-ever performance at the Youth Olympic Games

The 2018 Youth Olympic Games was India's most successful display at the Youth Olympics. The country bagged an impressive 13 medals. This included 3 gold, 9 silver and 1 bronze.

The Khelo India initiative was still in its infancy at this time. However, many of the athletes who won medals at the inaugural Khelo India Games represented India at the Youth Olympics. More promising athletes will most certainly come through in the upcoming editions of the Khelo India Games. Therefore, India's future looks bright when it comes to the Youth Olympics.

Giving a platform to several Tokyo 2020 Olympians

The Khelo India games have provided many athletes, who have the potential to represent the country at the highest level. The recently concluded Tokyo Olympics is the perfect example of it. Two of India's brightest young talents, Saurabh Chaudhary and Manu Bhaker, have risen through the ranks, courtesy of the Khelo India Games. Both shooters won gold medals at their respective 10m air pistol events during the 2018 edition of the Khelo India Games.

Despite both shooters failed to clinch medals at the Tokyo Olympics, they gained a valuable experience in turn. They are expected to grow stronger and remain medal contenders in the future.

Nurturing potential stars for upcoming Olympic Games

The Khelo India initiative has given India a huge pool of talents who possess the skill to win on the grandest stage. Apart from the Olympians mentioned above, several other individuals are waiting in the wings and can be genuine medal hopefuls in Paris 2024 and Los Angeles 2028. Some of these stars include weightlifter Jeremy Lalrinnunga who is India's first-ever Youth Olympics gold medalist. Apart from Jeremy, Lakshay Sen in badminton, Mehuli Ghosh in shooting, Komalika Bari in archery, and Nisar Ahmed in athletics also look promising. These athletes, given the right financial support and training, have the potential to win medals at the Olympic Games in the future.

There is no doubt that the Khelo India initiative has set the wheels in motion. However, the athletes should receive proper supervision and the right support. Only then, will this initiative bear fruit for the country in the future.

OBJECTIVES OF KHELO INDIA

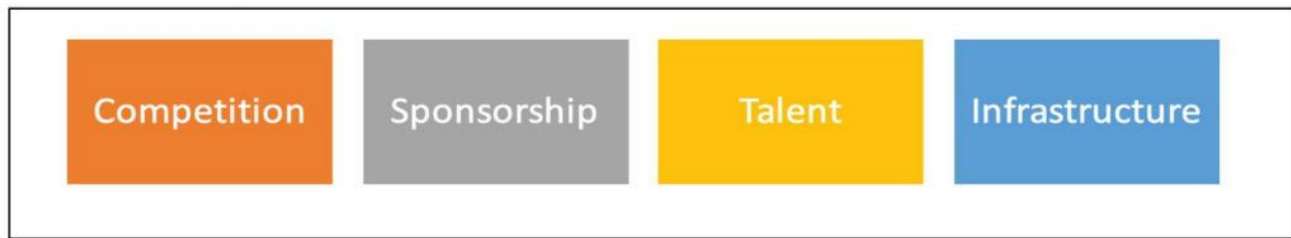
- It is a central government scheme covering the 1000 most deserving and talented athletes across whole India in every year.
- Selected athletes will be entitled to a scholarship amount of Five Lakh Rupees for eight consecutive years.
- It is a first-ever plan to be implemented for creating a long-term development pathway for athletes.
- To enable the sportsman to pursue both studies and sports, the program aims at identifying and promoting 20 Universities in the country as centres of sporting distinction.
- For sports promotion, the latest user-friendly technology would be used. Ex: Geographic Information System (GIS) for locating the sports infrastructure, a user-friendly website for indigenous sports, a National Sports Talent Search Portal and information dissemination for sports training through mobile apps.
- To ensure maximum entries for organized sports competitions, the programme encourages the school and colleges to organize programmes of high standards.
- Forming an active population with a healthy lifestyle is also the focus of this programme. For this purpose, a National Physical Fitness Drive is planned where children falling in the age bracket 10-18 years will be checked for physical fitness. Further, activities to support their physical fitness will be planned.
- The aim is to impact the whole of the sports ecosystem inclusive of the sports economy, competition structure, talent identification, coaching and infrastructure.
- The programme plans to engage youth living in deprived and disturbed areas into sporting activities so that they will be mainstreamed into the process of nation-building and weaned away from disruptive activities)

VERTICALS OF THE SCHEME OF KHELO INDIA

To meet the objectives of Khelo India, the entire programme is divided in 12 verticals as mentioned in the below picture.



To facilitate these objectives Khelo India Scheme has four components:



a. Competition: Khelo India scheme is lunched for searching best talent in grass root level. For searching new talents many different competitions are conducted to Block/District/State and National level. The competitions are held for different age-groups: above 6- under 12 years, above 12-under 18 years, above 18-under 36 years, 36 to 50 years, and Above 50 years. The competitions for above 36 age group are in context of encouraging general health. Physically challenged athletes have a separate set of competitions.

b. Sponsorship: Khelo India Scheme is Central Sponsored Scheme. The State and local authorities are involved but within the capacity of assistance regarding, identifying land for infrastructure, conducting competitions etc. Another unique aspect of the scheme would be the encouragement for PPP (Public - Private Partnership), where in the organizers of the events are free to invite private sponsors to contribute financially and in kind.

c. Talent: The aim of the scheme is to identify sporting talent in grass root level. Talented sportspersons among District, State and National levels are identified through competition under the age groups of 6-12 and 12-18. These selected candidates are eligible for scholarships or admission into SAI (Sports Authority of India) Centres and Sports Academies. The athletes are selected for Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) programme, where they would receive training and financial assistance of Rs. 5 lakh per annum.

d. Infrastructure:

Prior to Khelo India Scheme, USIS (Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme) was mandated with the responsibility of creating sports infrastructure. However, this scheme is now merged into the Khelo India Scheme. Under the new scheme, infrastructure is being developed both in the existing SAI Centres as well as identifying new spaces for sports infrastructure. Currently Khelo India provides Infrastructure support for 46 recognized SAI Centres.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR KHELO INDIA PROGRAMME

The eligibility criteria for the Khelo India program are given below:

- Candidates must be a resident of India.
- The applicant must be studying in school or college.
- Candidates below the age of 17 can participate in the under-17 category.
- Candidates below the age of 21 can participate in the under-21 category.

MEDAL TALLY

Khelo India Youth Games																		
Edition	Year	Host	Start Date	End Date	Sports	Gold	1st Team				2nd Team				3rd Team			
							G	S	B	T	G	S	B	T	G	S	B	T
I.	2018	Delhi	31st Jan 2018	8th Feb 2018	16	209	Haryana				Maharashtra				Delhi			
							3	26	3	102	3	3	4	111	2	2	4	94

							8		8		6	2	3		5	9	0	
i.	2019	Pune, Maharashtra	9th Jan 2019	20th Jan 2019	18	403	Maharashtra				Haryana				Delhi			
							8	6	81	228	6	5	6	178	4	3	5	13
							5	2			2	6	0		8	7	1	6
ii.	2020	Guwahati, Assam	10th Jan 2020	22nd Jan 2020	20	447	Maharashtra				Haryana				Delhi			
							7	7	10	256	6	6	7	200	3	3	4	12
							8	7	1		8	0	2		9	6	7	2
iii.	2021	Panchkula, Haryana. Postponed	4th June 2022	13th June 2022	25	269	Haryana				Maharashtra				Karnataka			
							5	3	46	137	4	4	4	125	2	1	2	67
							2	9			5	0	0		2	7	8	

(T - Total medals won, G - Gold won, S - Silver won, B - Bronze won)

The next edition of the Khelo India Youth Games will be held in Madhya Pradesh in January-February 2023, it was formally announced by Union of Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur. The venue for the Games was formally announced in the presence of Chief Minister of MP, Shivraj Singh Chouhan. The sports competition is scheduled to start on January 31, 2023 and end on February 11. Also present at the event on Thursday afternoon was the Union Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Nisith Pramanik, Minister of Sports and Youth Welfare, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Yashodhara Raje Scindia, Secretary Sports, Sujata Chaturvedi, Director General, Sports Authority of India, Sandip Pradhan, and other dignitaries from the Union Sports Ministry and the Sports Authority of India. The upcoming edition of the Khelo India Youth Games will feature a total of 27 disciplines; with water sports being included for the first time in the history of the games. New disciplines like Canoe Slalom, Kayaking, Canoeing and Rowing will also feature alongside the usual sports and indigenous games. The Games will take place across eight cities of Madhya Pradesh -- Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Mandla, Khargone (Maheshwar) and Balaghat, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) informed that.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt in the fact that sports are necessary for the growth of an individual as well as the country. Sports are a vital factor in increasing the soft power of the country. So it's necessary to promote sports culture in the country, especially countries like India, which have so much potential. So central government marched three scheme (Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, Urban Infrastructure Scheme, and National Sports Talent Search) into one scheme "khelo india". One of the main objectives of the Khelo India programme is to build a strong framework for all sports played in our country and promote "sports for Excellence" as well as "sports for all". The Khelo India programme has been introduced to revive the sports culture in India at the grass-root level by building a strong framework for all sports played in our country and establish India as a great sporting nation. The goal is to positively influence the whole sports ecosystem, which includes sports economics, competitive structure, talent identification, coaching and infrastructures. The main aim of this scheme is focus on grass root sportsmen and to prepare them for international competitions like Olympic Games, Commonwealth games, Asian games.

RECOMENDATION

- Further study can be done on involvement of women's participation in Khelo India.
- Similar study may be conducted at university level under 21.
- Similar study may be done state wise development in khelo India

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