

CHAPTER 2.7

YOUTH AND SPORTS

YOUTH AFFAIRS

2.7.1 While the role and contribution of youth is of vital importance in all countries, it is particularly significant in a country like India where the proportion of the youth in the country's overall social and demographic profile is continuously increasing. According to the 2001 Census, there were approximately 355 million people in the 15 to 35 age group, 74 per cent of whom lived in rural areas. The number is expected to rise to approximately 510 million by 2016. Both central and state governments need to harness the energies of this large group, providing them with adequate infrastructure of world standards for excellence in sports at national and international levels.

Achievements since Independence

2.7.2 The importance of youth in national development has been a recurring theme in all Five-Year Plans. The National Discipline Scheme was introduced in the Second Plan and continued in the Third Plan. The Fourth Plan gave special emphasis to the needs of the youth and to leadership training. Support was provided to voluntary organisations to participate in youth development programmes. Community service was developed as an integral part of the educational curriculum. The Fifth Plan laid emphasis on the expansion and strengthening of the National Service Scheme (NSS) and the Nehru Yuva Kendras (NYK). The National Service Volunteer Scheme (NSVS) was launched during this Plan period. In the Sixth Plan, an effort was made to have effective coordination of different programmes.

2.7.3 The sector received a major boost in the Seventh Plan, when a National Youth Policy was framed and a Plan of Action formulated in 1992.

Plan allocations saw an eight-fold increase, from Rs. 26.54 crore in Sixth Plan to Rs. 306.35 crore. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports made major strides during the Eighth Plan period. The number of NYKs went up from 398 to 500, the number of youth clubs affiliated to the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) touched 1.79 lakh and 1.3 million volunteers were enrolled under the NSS by the end of the Plan period. The Eighth Plan and the National Youth Policy laid stress on organising the youth for promoting national and cultural integration by fostering interaction between young people from different parts of the country, especially those from the isolated border and tribal areas. It also emphasised awareness building and involvement of the youth in social programmes relating to literacy, environment, health and family welfare and community development. The allocation for youth and sports programmes was increased to Rs. 349 crore and then to Rs. 826.09 crore in the Ninth Plan.

Thrust in Ninth Plan

2.7.4 The thrust in the Ninth Plan was on harnessing yuva shakti (youth power). The National Youth Policy emphasises:

1. Involving young persons in various community-based nation building activities and a new scheme called National Reconstruction Corps (NRC) to involve youth volunteers in such activities.
2. Youth empowerment and gender justice through an inter-sectoral approach.
3. Providing special attention to education, training and employment, health, environment, sports, recreation and leisure, art and culture, science and technology, etc.

4. Developing the interest of youth in development-oriented programmes.

Review of Performance in Ninth Plan

2.7.5 During the Ninth Plan, the NYKS was able to extend its activities to a larger number of villages and it now has offices in almost 500 districts. The NYKS took up several new initiatives to involve the rural youth - by motivating them to organise themselves into youth clubs and self-help groups. Schemes like the NSVS, Financial Assistance to Youth Clubs, Award to Outstanding Youth Clubs and Youth Development Centre have been successful in encouraging young people to take up development-oriented programmes. The NYKS also took up major programmes under the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), being implemented in collaboration with Ministry of Rural Development. The objective of the programme is to bring selected below poverty line (BPL) youth above the poverty line in three years. Watershed management programmes are also being implemented by the NYKS. In addition, the NYKS have also undertaken assistance to disabled persons for providing aids and appliances, running of 100 old age day care centres, 30 Gandhi Millennium Youth Peace Centres, wildlife watch centres, National Youth Cooperatives, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-NYKS Youth Volunteers Against Poverty Awards Programmes. The coverage under NSS increased to more than 1.7 million students.

Approach for the Tenth Plan

2.7.6 Adolescent youth in the 10-19 years age group numbered 230 million, accounting for 22.8 per cent of the population. It is proposed to target this segment of the youth population through specific intervention strategies that will focus on youth and power, gender justice, youth health and responsible living.

2.7.7 The major thrust will be on involving the youth in the process of national planning and development and making them the focal point of development strategy by providing proper

educational and training opportunities, access to information on employment opportunities including entrepreneurial guidance and financial credit, proper platforms for developing qualities of leadership, tolerance and open mindedness, patriotism, etc.

2.7.8 The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports will play a pro-active and catalytic role in exploring and identifying employment opportunities for the youth in coordination with other ministries and departments so as to optimally utilise the investments in various youth-related schemes. The Ministry will also play an active advocacy role in promoting gender justice by sensitising the youth towards gender issues.

2.7.9 Youth activities will focus on providing quality health services and will ensure that the youth have access to information relating to reproduction, health issues, managing alcoholism, drug addiction, etc. It is necessary to address the problem of youth with special needs.

2.7.10 Value-based education will be imparted which will focus on respect for elders, tolerance for others' beliefs and religions, compassion towards the poor and needy. The youth will be involved in the protection and preservation of nature. Steps will be taken to increase their awareness of India's cultural heritage and history.

2.7.11 Adolescents need particular attention and concentrated efforts are required to build a relatively stable place in society for them and help them overcome the barriers to healthy development.

2.7.12 Efforts will be made for networking between government and non-government organisations (NGOs) in youth development.

Action Plan for the Tenth Plan

2.7.13 Major expansion of the NYK and NSS with emphasis on vocational training and employment promotion will be the lynchpin of youth programmes in the Tenth Plan. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports will establish effective linkages with all departments and agencies involved in youth

development work at the Centre and in the states. Expansion of NYKS to cover all the districts and mobilising and empowering the youth by strengthening the youth club movement to cover at least 50 per cent of the six lakh villages will also be undertaken. However, a thorough evaluation of the activities of NYKS would be necessary before doing this. Such evaluation can substantially improve the efficiency of the organisation and utility of the scheme which it operates.

2.7.14 The Youth Development Centres (YDCs) will be expanded to achieve the ultimate objective of one youth development centre in each of the country's 5,000 blocks. The YDCs are to be made centres of information for youth and eventually information technology (IT) centres. The value of such centres will be enhanced by associating and collaborating with the Department of Information Technology.

2.7.15 More youth clubs, which have been the focal point of youth activities, will be established so as to provide a platform for young people to raise issues concerning them.

2.7.16 All categories of youths, including rural youth, should get an opportunity to participate in various schemes like the National Cadet Corps (NCC), NSS, Scouts and Guides and NRC. The activities of the NSS network will be expanded to cover all degree colleges and +2 schools while the NRC will extend its reach to 500 districts by the end of the Tenth Plan period.

2.7.17 With a view to making the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development (RGNIYD) a truly national centre for information, documentation, research and training concerning youth matters, the Institute will be provided additional resources in terms of both manpower and equipment.

Programmes for Adolescents

2.7.18 Adolescents have very special and distinct needs. It is essential to invest in them, as they are

the future of the country. The most important issues regarding the adolescents are: health, nutrition, education, both formal and non formal, vocation, recreation and sports, child labour, children in difficult situations, alcohol and drug abuse.

2.7.19 All adolescents must be made aware of issues like safe motherhood, reproductive health rights, sexuality and sexual responsibility, age of marriage, and first pregnancy, family size, health care, hygiene, immunisation, HIV/AIDS prevention, the importance of education, particularly of girls, drug and alcohol abuse. They should also have some legal literacy and be made aware of vocational opportunities and career planning.

2.7.20 A scheme for adolescents is proposed to be launched in the Tenth Plan. The establishment of a National Youth Centre and State Youth Centres with outright capital grants by the Centre has also been proposed. These centres will provide a forum for the youth to debate issues concerning them and the nation at large, give expression to their abundant creative energies and exhibit their talents.

2.7.21 There are certain sections of youth who suffer from physical and mental disabilities. The Department of Youth Affairs should become the nodal agency for coordinating and monitoring the various facilities and services meant for them.

2.7.22 While designing the content of programmes for adolescents it would be highly beneficial to obtain the views and suggestions of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Department of Women and Child Development as well as those of the Ministry of Rural Development.

SPORTS

Achievement Since Independence

2.7.23 The importance of physical education, games, sports and yoga for health and physical fitness with a view to increasing individual productivity cannot be ignored. The value of sports as a means of promoting social harmony and discipline is well recognised the world over.

2.7.24 Successive Plans have laid emphasis on sports and physical education and the sector got additional importance in 1984 when a separate department for sports was created, which was later made a separate ministry in 1999. The National College of Physical Education and National Institute of Sports were established during the Second Plan and sports facilities like stadia, swimming pools and open-air theatres were constructed. The National Coaching Scheme was launched during the Third Plan, while allocations for physical education, games and sports were increased during the Fourth Plan. Coaching facilities were expanded in the Fifth Plan period. The Sixth Plan laid emphasis on spotting and nurturing young talent in different sports and set up facilities in different institutions for promising sports persons. Adventure sports were promoted during the Seventh Plan along with emphasis on the development of sports infrastructure at the grassroot level and laying of synthetic tracks. A National Sports Policy was formulated on the basis of which a Plan of Action was formulated in 1992. Many rural schools were assisted in developing playgrounds and buying sports equipment. Talented school children in the 9-12 age group were identified and special training was imparted to sportspersons under the Special Area Games (SAG) and Sports Project Development Area Centres (SPDA) schemes.

Ninth Plan Review and Achievements

2.7.25 Then Ninth Plan also attempted to develop excellence in sports, provide more scientific facilities, foster the establishment of sound principles of sports physiology and medicine with the requisite quality of manpower relevant to the training needs of sportspersons. In addition, it addressed the following issues:

- enhancement of the competence and skills of coaches.
- promotion of sports and physical education among girls and people in the rural areas.
- participation of state governments in developing a comprehensive plan for the development of sports.
- creation of sports infrastructure, including synthetic playing surfaces, and making these available to the public.
- promotion of people's participation in various sports activities; and
- financial assistance, including scholarships, to national federations of different sports and promising sportspersons as well as for the promotion of rural sports. Ninth Plan targets, both physical and financial, have largely been met.

Approach for the Tenth Plan

2.7.26 There is an immediate need to create a network of basic sports infrastructure throughout the country and higher level of infrastructure at the district, state, and regional centres of the Sports Authority of India (SAI). It is even more important to provide access to these facilities. Modern equipment and training facilities at par with those available in developed countries would be provided to sportspersons to enable them to compete in international events. Efforts will be made to improve coaching skills and raise them to international standards and to the training and development of sports scientists, judges, referees and umpires. Emphasis will be laid on basic as well as applied research in sports-related fields. A drug-free environment will be created by designing effective checks to eliminate drug abuse. Except for a few popular sports, which attract private sponsorship, the majority of sports activities are devoid of any career opportunities for sportspersons. Hence, there is a need to have definite incentives for sportspersons in the form of job reservation and awards.

2.7.27 A multi-sectoral approach will be adopted for resource generation by tapping private and public sector resource to promote and develop sports activities. Corporate houses will be asked to adopt particular disciplines as well as sportspersons for long-term development. A National Sports Development Fund has been created with 100 per cent income tax exemption for donors.

2.7.28 While the central government would focus its attention on achieving excellence at the national and international level, state governments will focus on broad-basing of sports. High priority will be given to the promotion of sports in schools and rural areas, and panchayats and youth and sports clubs will be mobilised to promote sports. Sports disciplines will be prioritised on the basis of proven potential, popularity and performance and greater emphasis will be given to junior and sub-junior levels. The mass media will be mobilised for fostering a sports culture in the country.

2.7.29 An annual sports calendar of national championships at various levels will be prepared and participation in international events by various federations will be encouraged. The working of federations/associations has to be more transparent, democratic, professional and accountable. The central government will formulate a model organisational structure as well as a set of guidelines and, if necessary, enact a suitable legislation.

2.7.30 A decision has also been taken to bring all the sports-related schemes under the following six categories; (i) schemes relating to infrastructure; (ii) schemes relating to talent search and training; (iii) schemes relating to events including the holding of national/international sports events; (iv) schemes relating to awards; (v) schemes relating to institutions; and (vi) incentives for the promotion of sports activities. New programmes such as setting up sports state academies, recreational sports and adventure sports will be taken up. A drug free environment is to be created by way of designing effective checks to eliminate drug abuse in Sports.

Action Plan for the Tenth Plan

2.7.31 Adequate sports infrastructure will be created in schools and colleges. All urban bodies should earmark open spaces for playgrounds whenever new colonies are being developed. Conversion of playing fields into housing/commercial complexes must be prohibited. The establishment and development of sports infrastructure should be taken up as an activity under the NSS/NYK as well as through schemes of the Ministry of Rural

Development, with local bodies also being involved. State governments should be responsible for the creation of sports infrastructure at the district and tehsil levels, while regional centres of the SAI must take up development of higher level of sports infrastructure at the district and state headquarters. A tie-up with sports hostels and state-level training centres may be worked out to ensure better utilisation of these facilities.

2.7.32 State governments should provide funds for broad basing of sports with financial assistance from the central government.

2.7.33 Sports activities should be selected for promotion keeping in mind the facilities available, particularly in rural areas. As far as possible, disciplines which do not require much equipment such as kho-kho, kabaddi, volleyball, track events and long jump in athletics should be selected. The Ministry of Rural Development should play an active role in the promotion of sports in rural areas. The Ministry should extend assistance to the panchayats for the creation and maintenance of play fields and for providing sports equipment.

2.7.34 Routine sports programmes in village schools should be entrusted to the physical education teacher or any other classroom teacher. The physical and mental fitness of students will improve through participation in sports and this, in turn, will contribute to an improvement in their overall performance. This will also make the parents realise the importance of their children participating in sports.

2.7.35 Municipalities and municipal corporations should also contribute to the development of sports by ensuring the maintenance of playgrounds, stadia and swimming pools and by involving a larger number of youth in sports activities, besides supplying the required quality of sports equipment. They must also organise competitions for all the Asian Games disciplines, particularly those which are popular at the local and state level. Town Planning rules should not merely provide for play fields, sports fields, vayayamshalas / gyms etc in new areas at the planning stage but should actively

protect and maintain the existing sports infrastructure from encroachment.

2.7.36 The central and state governments should review the status of the physical education colleges and take appropriate measures to improve the curriculum, the quality of teaching staff and the infrastructure.

2.7.37 In each state, Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas identified as sports schools may be allotted two to three disciplines to avoid overlapping and to cover all the Asian Games disciplines. This competition will help us make a mark in the international sports arena. These pace setting schools should have the basic minimum sports infrastructure and facilities.

2.7.38 Though inter-university competitions in various disciplines are held each year, inter-college programmes need to be strengthened. It should be obligatory for all the colleges to organise inter college competitions and to participate in university-level competitions. The inter-university programme should be made more attractive in order to encourage students to participate in various competitions at the college and university levels. The strength-ening of the university sports programme would contribute to improving the performance of national teams.

2.7.39 In order to provide talented sportspersons with good quality equipment, the domestic sports industry should be given incentives for manufacturing equipment of international standards. Till that time, good quality equipment needs to be imported.

2.7.40 The procedures relating to identification of disciplines, selection and preparation of sports persons/teams, identification of national coaches, selection of sportspersons for coaching camps, selection of venues of camps, designing of physical fitness/medical/skill tests and the need for additional facilities for substantive coaching camps would all be taken into account when preparing a practicable Plan for building up the winning capabilities of sportspersons.

2.7.41 Sports federations, state governments as well as private and public sector organisations would

have to be fully involved in the formulation and implementation of the Plan. However, such a short-term Plan must have a long-term perspective of broad-basing the sports with a view to achieving physical fitness for all and promoting excellence through spotting and nurturing talent. The elements of this long-term Plan are:

- Creation of a sports climate in the country and generating a consciousness in every citizen of the need to be physically fit and to participate in games and sports. This requires setting up of infrastructure in a planned manner and more efficient use of available infrastructure and coaching facilities with promotional activities like 'Bhartiyam', a programme on national integration.
- Establishment of a pyramidal structure for sports promotion beginning with primary and secondary schools and going up to college level. In order to develop these resources centres, an adequate number of physical education teachers are required. Besides playgrounds in schools and creating the necessary 'encouraging' environment for students, there is need to provide adequate support to the SAG and National Sports Talent Contest (NSTC) schemes, which provide opportunities to potential sportspersons in tribal, remote and rural areas. There is also a need to have separate infrastructure for sports institutions.
- For excellence in sports, a backup of improved technology is necessary.
- Specific efforts should be made to tap indigenous potential for swimming in coastal areas, and archery in tribal areas.
- Sports schools should be set up in states in collaboration with the private sector by providing them attractive incentives.
- Sports and physical education should be integrated in the educational curriculum.
- A policy needs to be evolved for promoting the participation of NGOs and industrial houses in sports.

- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports should formulate a special scheme for the promotion of sports and games for disabled persons.

set up a State Sports Academy in every state in partnership with the corporate sector.

THE PATH AHEAD

Programmes for Adolescents:

2.7.42 A new scheme for adolescents is proposed to be launched in the Tenth Plan. This is aimed at sensitising them on issues like safe motherhood, reproductive health rights, sexuality and sexual responsibility, age of marriage and first pregnancy, health care, hygiene, immunisation, HIV/AIDS prevention, the importance of education, particularly of girls, drug and alcohol abuse etc. It will also provide them legal literacy and make them aware of vocational opportunities and career planning.

Setting up of State Sports Academy

2.7.43 The objective of this new scheme is to select best talent in sports in the 10-13 age group and groom them to achieve excellence at the national and international level. It is proposed to

Scheme of Dope Test

2.7.44 The scheme aims at the prevention of drug abuse in sports by providing adequate facilities for dope tests, creating awareness of the issue amongst athletes, parents, coaches, doctors, scientists, and sports governing bodies. It will provide for educational programmes, establishment of accredited dope control laboratories and provisions for dealing with offenders.

2.7.45 While creation of adequate sports infrastructure in schools and colleges will continue to receive attention, the SAI will take up the development of higher level of sports infrastructure at the district and state headquarters.

2.7.46 Scheme-wise break-up of the Tenth Plan outlay of Ministry of Youth Affairs and sports is given in the Appendix.

