

OLYMPICS @ INDIA

NEWS: India has made an ambitious pitch to host the **2036 Olympics**, but the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** highlighted the **counter-concerns over governance issues and rising doping violations in India**.

- With **Brisbane** already awarded the **2032 Games**, the 2036 edition remains open.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Major Challenges Facing India's Sports Ecosystem

1. Governance Crisis in Indian Olympic Association (IOA)

- A prolonged **tussle between IOA President P.T. Usha and the Executive Council** has led to administrative paralysis.
- Key disputes include issues over **sponsorship transparency, alleged financial mismanagement, and appointment of CEO Raghuram Iyer**.
- This internal conflict has significantly **hampered India's preparation** for major multi-sport events like the Olympics and Asian Games.

2. Doping Scandal and Integrity Issues

- According to **WADA's 2023 report**, India recorded the **highest positivity rate** for banned substances among major countries.
- A **WADA study on minors** placed India **second only to Russia** in doping violations among youth athletes.
- **Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU)** ranked India **second globally** in doping cases in track & field as of May 2025, after Kenya.
- These statistics severely **undermine India's global sporting reputation** and pose challenges to fair competition.

3. Underwhelming Performance at Paris Olympics (2024)

- India won **only six medals (1 silver, 5 bronze)**, placing it **71st in the medal tally**.
- It ranked **below smaller nations** such as **Georgia, Kazakhstan, and North Korea**.
- In stark contrast, the **USA (126 medals)** and **China (91 medals)** demonstrated dominance with smaller populations relative to India.

Key Anti-Doping Institutions and Legal Frameworks

1. National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)

- Established in **2005** under the **Societies Registration Act**.
- Operates under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** to:
 - Conduct doping tests.
 - Coordinate awareness campaigns.
 - Implement WADA Code compliance.

2. Indian Olympic Association (IOA) Medical Commission

- Advises IOA on **athlete health, medical protocols**, and **anti-doping measures** for events like the Olympics, Commonwealth, and Asian Games.

3. National Anti-Doping Act, 2022

- First standalone legislation in India for anti-doping governance.
- Key provisions:
 - Legal enforcement of **WADA Code**.
 - Empowers authorities for **search, seizure, and disciplinary action**.
 - Establishes **Disciplinary and Appeal Panels**.
 - Promotes **education, research, and outreach** on doping.

4. International Commitment

- India is a signatory to the **UNESCO International Convention Against Doping in Sport**, reinforcing its global obligation.

Government Initiatives and Institutions Supporting Sports

1. Khelo India Program

- Aims to **promote grassroots sports**, talent identification, and infrastructure creation.
- Encourages **school, university, and state-level competitions**.

2. National Sports Policy (NSP)

- Sets the national vision for enhancing training quality, infrastructure, and participation.
- Aligns with goals like **Olympic medal performance** and **sports education integration**.

3. Sports Authority of India (SAI)

- Premier training institution under the Sports Ministry.
- Runs **National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs)** and **sports hostels** for nurturing elite talent.

4. Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)

- Provides **financial and logistical support** to athletes with **Olympic medal potential**.
- Covers costs for **coaching, nutrition, foreign exposure**, and competition readiness.

5. Mission Olympic Cell (MOC)

- Functions under the Sports Ministry to **monitor training progress** and **resolve bottlenecks** for TOPS athletes.

6. National Sports Federations (NSFs)

- Recognised and funded by the Government to develop their respective sports.
- Coordinate with the IOA and SAI for national/international participation.

Funding and Welfare Mechanisms

1. National Sports Development Fund (NSDF)

- Provides resources for:
 - Training under international coaches.
 - Development of infrastructure.
 - Sponsorship of promising sportspersons.

2. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Welfare Fund for Sportspersons (PDUNWFS)

- Offers **financial support to retired/injured sportspersons** and their families.
- Recognizes and preserves the legacy of **yesteryear athletes**.

3. National Sports Awards

- Awards like **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, Arjuna Award, and Dronacharya Award** celebrate sporting excellence and coaching contribution.

Measures Suggested for Reform and Performance Improvement

1. Infrastructure and Funding

- Enhance **investment in sports infrastructure**, especially in **rural and tier-2 cities**.
- Upgrade **existing facilities** and ensure maintenance and accessibility.

2. Early Talent Identification

- Implement **school-level scouting programs** integrated with physical education.
- Create **regional talent pools** in collaboration with local authorities.

3. Education and Anti-Doping Awareness

- Introduce **anti-doping curriculum** in physical education and coaching certifications.
- Launch **mass awareness drives** to address doping among minors.

4. Broaden Sporting Base

- Shift focus from cricket to other disciplines like **athletics, swimming, hockey, and indigenous sports** (e.g., Mallakhamb, Kabaddi).
- Build **professional leagues** to increase participation and popularity.

5. Corporate and Community Involvement

- Offer **tax incentives** for corporate sponsorships in sports.
- Encourage **CSR investments** in local coaching and youth development.

6. Role Models and Inspiration

- Showcase journeys of **successful athletes** (like Neeraj Chopra, P.V. Sindhu) to motivate youth.
- Use **media campaigns** to build a sports culture at the grassroots.

Concluding Remarks and Olympic Vision 2036

- India's bid to host the **2036 Olympics** is gaining momentum.
- However, success hinges on:
 - **Transparent sports governance** (clean IOA).

- **Reduction in doping cases.**
- **Improved Olympic medal tally.**
- A reformed and performance-driven sports ecosystem is critical to establishing **India as a credible global sporting power.**

Source: https://www.business-standard.com/sports/olympics/ioc-to-india-on-hosting-2036-olympics-first-put-your-house-in-order-125070400201_1.html