

ROLE OF OLYMPICS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PARITY AND THE SPIRIT OF OLYMPISM

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ABSTRACT

Olympics has a fundamental paradigm, it is not only a sporting event held every four years, but a spirit of sportsmanship focusing on athleticism, sport excellence, competitiveness of the highest order. Olympics is eternal just like the human world, its civilisation and its culture. It is believed that the economic and social objective and commercial interest has intertwined with sport. It has become a great source of motivation for athletes but simultaneously, also demands intense training from the athletes for better performance every time. Therefore, the spirit of Olympism has enabled sport to combine human efforts and their sportsmanship for an intrinsic reward. Sport has become one of the most powerful tool for promoting gender equality and empowering young women and girls. In widest sense of the term, sports is a form of humanitarian education, clearly expressed in the Olympic Chapter in paragraph 2, "Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining culture and education, Olympics seeks to create a way of life based on joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principal" (D. Michaelidis.). It is therefore, recognized that sport has that unrivalled capacity that can motivate and inspire people and, the Olympic Movement has the duty and the opportunity to contribute actively, in line with its vision of : " Building a better world through sport". However, many needs to be done and great resources are needed before an ideal world can be established as envisioned in the Olympic values.

Key Words: Olympics, Human, Parity and Spirit

INTRODUCTION:

Further, one of the fundamental aim of sports as formulated in the Olympic charter is to educate people through, in a spirit of better communication and friendship, thus contributing to a better and more peaceful world. In addition to the educational aspect, moral values and ideologies, there is a social and biological aspect to sport as well. The objective of humanitarian and democratic education is the creation of balanced, responsible, active and independent human beings, who respect their fellow human beings and comply with the laws of the state, competing in honesty

and fairness within a set framework (D. Michaelidis, “Sports for Young Athletes”, 40th Session of Young Participants, 2000, pp 157).

As is clearly stated in the Olympic Charter: “The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practised in accordance with Olympism and its values.” (Olympic Charter, Chapter 1, Rule 1.1).

The three values of Olympism as enumerated on the site olympics.com are excellence, friendship and respect. These 3 values constitute the foundation of the Olympic Movement on which are built the activities for promotion of sport, culture and education with a vision to build a better world. Originally the values of Olympism as expressed in the Olympic Charter were to “encourage effort”, “preserve human dignity” and “develop harmony”.

Olympism is a philosophy of life, which exalts and combines in whole, the qualities of mind, will and body, in a balanced manner. By blending sport with culture and education, Olympism aims toward a creation of a way of life that is based on finding joy when putting in an effort, valuing and educating by setting good example and respecting the universal fundamental and ethical principles. The Olympic Movement has set a goal to contribute to building a peaceful and a better world through sport practised without any discrimination of any sorts and in the Olympic spirit. The youth is educated with an Olympic spirit of mutual understanding, a spirit of friendship, a sense of solidarity and fair play.

Over time, these ethos have evolved and are now expressed in more contemporary terms as:

- Encouraging people to be their potential best: Striving for **excellence**
- Having respect towards oneself, the rules, their opponents, the environment and the public: Demonstrating **respect** in many different manners.
- Bringing people together, uniqueness of the event of the Olympic Games: Celebrating **friendship**.
- Following World War I, the IOC had selected Antwerp to host the 1920 Olympic Games. The organisers overcame many obstacles to deliver an edition of the Games that is still recognised for its lasting contributions to sport, gender equality, unity and peace. One

hundredyears later, the Olympic Games of Antwerp 1920 live on as a symbolof post-crisis solidarity and spirit of recovery.

The Games have also continued to respond to new and emerging global challenges such as advancing gender equality, creating opportunities for refugees to compete and starting initiatives to cut carbon emissions, invest time and energy in climate sustainability, and fight climate change.

The International Olympic Committee is strongly committed to the goals of promotion and respect of human rights with the scope of its responsibility across its three spheres of activity i.e as an organisation, as the owner of the Olympic Games and as the leader and flag bearer of the Olympic Movement. One hundred years after Antwerp hosted the Olympic Games, their spirit still teaches us that –by working together – we can overcome enormous challenges,” said President Bach. “We should all strive to continue their legacy of unity, peace, and strength as we face new, unforeseen global challenges.....”

MODERN CIVILISATION CRISIS:

With the passage of time, and rise and fall of political regimes and economical devastations, humanity has experienced wars, political, social and technological developments. The modern world has been shaken by significant global events and other political, socio- economic and natural cataclysms. The world has experienced rapid development which in turn has caused innumerable crisis, too. Humanity, but has always strived successfully to overcome these critical incidences and issues with rationality, practicality and ingenuity. However, the present situation faced by humanity is the doing of mankind to its own environment, to the bounties of nature, so much so that this damage done to the environment, the climate,the natural resources, the flora and fauna is hard to curb and irreversible in many ways. Natural and social sciences have always propounded the theory of significance, cohesiveness co-existence of Nature and Human. This crisis has caused a disturbance in human society and threatens the fundamentals of this coexistence. The environment (Nature) aspect includes all it components (air, water, land, climate, bio- diversity, natural resources and minerals), while the human dimension includes all human matters (all given problems concerning a human development model, its politics, economics,

culture and security).

In the present times and our society, the politics and the economy of this society upholds capital (money and wealth) as supreme and the only measure of human development, of prosperity and progress. This upholding of capital, projects the same principle in various sectors like education, economy, commerce, philosophy, sociology, psychology, political science, home science, defence and strategic studies, ecology, and environmental sciences, communication and journalism, computer science and information science, biomedical science, geography, history, archeology and culture, agriculture science, social medicine, and community health, bio-technology, anthropology, international relations, linguistics, population science and science technology policy studies, social work, statistics and mathematics, sports and games and this is why the operators of different sectors of culture entirely act upon money-based norms. The whole science technology and research is geared to MNCs and maximisation of capital, money or wealth. The focus of all sectors as mentioned above, which have a bearing on the human society its mechanisms and functioning channels and measure its objectives on capital and wealth, which itself poses a crisis for humanity and the human society. The outlook for service to humanity, good for all humans is challenged by greed for capital and when wealth generation takes the forefront.

Another challenge to our humanity is Sustainability across a wide and related social, environment and economic matters. Issues like climate change, economic inequality, social injustices are affecting societies and people throughout the world. In turn, the sporting community also raises its concern on these matters of injustices and inequality as it impacts both the management and their responsibilities towards the young people and the future generation.

STATE OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS:

In recent times and studies it has been seen observed that all the global institutions concerned with human growth, like the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, World Bank etc. have been pointing towards our development model as in an unsustainable mode, and the highlights being inequity, poverty, injustice, crime, violence, unendurable inequality etc.

In the January 2004 the World Watch Washington reported that the extravagant and unsustainable lifestyle the world's rich and upper middle classes (constituting one fourth of the world) is pushing the human community towards a dangerous crisis.

In the 2002 UN Human Development Report, it expressed that the world's richest 1 percent receive as much in terms of incomes as the poorest 75 percent. The 2001-UN Human Development reports that, "of the 4.6 billion are illiterate, nearly a billion lack access to improved water resources, and 2.4 billion lack access to basic sanitation. Nearly 32 million boys and girls are out of school. And 11 million children under age of 5 die each year from preventable causes, equivalent to more than 30,000 each day. Around 1.2 billion people live on less than (or equivalent of) \$1.90 dollar a day(2011 PPP US\$), and 2.8 billion less than \$2".

Report by the World Bank, 2019 expressed that if the climate change is not checked then the phenomena will impact 132 million people and push them to extreme poverty by 2030. It also highlighted that climate change will become a strong driver for internal migration wherein, by 2050 about 216 million people would have moved within their countries.

Another UNDP 2019 report stated that the the number of people living in poverty rose in 2020 by an estimated 119-124 million for the first time since 1998 and as many as 811 million people are estimated to go hungry. This is in contrast to a steady decline for a decade, where world hunger is rising again. The number of undernourished people is estimated to grow by 161 million from 2019 to 2020, which is huge humanitarian crisis driven by factors like political conflicts, climate change. Another report by the UNDP states that almost 690 million people, globally, went hungry in year 2019, an increase of 10 million from year 2018, with nearly 60 million increase in 5 years. Reasons leading to such a hike are reportedly high cost and low affordability, wherein evidence suggests that a healthy diet costs far more than US\$ 1.90/day, but 3 billion people or more cannot afford a healthy diet. This is especially the case in Asia where the most numerous hungry are present but quickly expanding to Africa. The global prevalence of undernourishment or the overall percentage of hungry people – has changed very little at 8.9 percent, but it is seen that the absolute numbers have been rising since 2014. It means that over the last five years with the increase in global population, hunger has also grown. And when this is

translated into percentage terms great regional disparities that are otherwise hidden, come to the fore. Africa is the hardest hit region and increasing, with 19.1 percent its people undernourished. This statistics is more than double the rate in Asia which is at 8.3 percent and in Latin America and the Caribbean at 7.4 percent. On this current trends, by 2030, Africa will have more than half of the world's chronically hungry. But for now, Asia continually has the greatest number of undernourished people, i.e. 381 million. Africa is second with 250 million, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean having 48 million.

WHO also reported that 2.4 billion people lacked access to basic sanitation services such as toilets and latrines. It stated that, 3 out of every 10 people live without safe and sanitary drinking water (WHO, 2019).

The UNICEF report stated that 49 million children under 5 suffer from malnutrition. As many as 149 million are stunted, while 40 million children are overweight. 45 percent of all child deaths worldwide are from causes related to undernutrition totalling to 3.1 million children each year. It has also been observed that about 1 in 9 people on earth don't have enough food to lead a healthy, active life. The UNDP Report 2019, states that some 17 percent of children born in low human development countries in 2000 will have died before age 20, as compared with just 1 percent of children born in very high human development countries.

As noted by UNDP, there'll be two seismic shifts which will shape the 21st century: Climate change and technological transformations. The climate crisis is already hitting the poorest , the hardest, while technological advances such as machine learning and artificial intelligence can leave behind entire groups of population. It is analyzed that 42 percent of adults in low human development countries have a primary education, as compared to the 94 percent in very high human development countries but there are gaps at all levels of education. Only 3.2 percent of adults in low human development countries have a tertiary education, compared with the 29 percent in developed countries. The furthest behind include the 600 million people still living in extreme income poverty— and the additional billion people when poverty is measured by the Multidimensional Poverty Index. It is estimated that 262 million children are out of primary or secondary school, and about 5.4 million children globally, do not survive their first five years of life.

The phenomena of climate change will hurt human development in many ways going beyond crop failures and natural disasters. It is reported that “between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause an additional 250,000 deaths a year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress. Hundreds of millions more people could be exposed to deadly heat by 2050, and the geographic range for disease vectors—such as mosquitoes that transmit malaria or dengue—will likely shift and expand”. The life expectancy of people born in very high human development countries are expected to increase almost 19 more years (or almost one third longer) than people in low human development countries. It has been observed that people at age 70 in very high human development countries are expected to live almost 5 more years (around 50 percent longer) than people in low human development countries. These gaps keep widening when factors like quality of health is considered (UNDP, 2019).

THE EFFORTS:

Most of the countries are categorised as developed, developing or underdeveloped. This categorisation also marks the degree of participation of olympic sports in various parts of the world. It is noted that developing countries do not participate in Winter Olympics as they lack the facilities and infrastructure to support its sportsperson for such games. Similarly, developing countries though, participate in the Summer Olympics they largely do so in sports requiring minimum of facilities and equipment. The developing countries mostly compete in individual events such as athletics, boxing, wrestling, weightlifting etc. as these events require little or inexpensive equipments. Inadequacy of funds and unavailability of infrastructure, lack of experienced trainers and coaches and low standardisation of necessary material, has handicapped developing countries to participate in other sports, thus limiting their level and degree of participation. In developing countries, there is scarcity of resources and government in turn steers the resources in avenues of most urgent need of society. Therefore, there is a great neglect of funding on part of government for sports development, which unfortunately is not compensated by the private channels either. This is also one vital reason for disparity of sports development in developed and developing countries.

The Olympic Committee being aware of the problems faced by developing countries, and also other unfortunates, like refugees, women sportspersons, etc have tried to enhance participation, spirit of sportsmanship and the ethos of Olympics by devising various programs, alleviating and reducing obstacles for greater participation and becoming an equal partner in bridging the gap between the developed and developing countries through its various efforts on environment consciousness and sustainability. Some of these programs that have impacted lives of person, society and communities are like the OVEP i.e.

1. Olympics Values Education Program. This program is inclusive and designed for young people with different levels of sport ability. The program is built on the principles of excellence, respect and friendship, which are the values of Olympics. The curriculum is designed on value based learnings and teach the participants to assume the responsibilities of good citizens. Through the programme the importance of benefits of sports and physical activity, its impact on individual health and social interaction is communicated. OVEP is designed for teachers, instructors, coaches, sports club and government and educational authorities. The OVEP toolkits are free resources which are designed to enrich educational curriculum, with Olympic based theme for 8-12 year olds, teaching them transferable life skills.
2. Gender Equality- The IOC has used Sports as a tool to promote Gender equality, ensuring and balancing equal participation of athletes in the Game.
3. Organizing and initiating campaigns for advocacy and awareness, leadership development, appointing women in leadership and administrative roles and key positions and giving greater access and opportunities for participation. The IOC's Equality and Inclusion Programme covers IOC's objectives and responsibility as an organization, owner of olympic games, and leader of the Olympic Movement. The report also focusses on the five areas of participation, leadership, safe sport, portrayal and resource allocation.

(a) The IOC has taken steps in sensitising and spreading awareness of gender equality. Through this effort the IOC has set guidelines for gender practice and implementation of gender-equal and fair practices in all forms of communication” across the IOC, at the Olympic Games and throughout the Olympic Movement – whose members are, in turn, encouraged to adopt and adapt these Guidelines according to cultural contexts. Through this the Olympic Committee has ensured that all stakeholders work together towards gender equality and equal opportunity for women athletes from all over the world.

(b) Women in Sport Commission is another platform to increase participation and equality of women by the Olympic Committee. This commission is formed to facilitate, advise and ensure implementation of policies for development of women participation in sport and ensure the overall benefit of physical activity. This Commission works in tandem with IOC Session, IOC Executive and the President. This Commission ensures that the rights and well being of women in sports is ensured. It advises on strategy for women in sport. It also encourages women in leadership positions, greater participation of women in various sports and ensuring greater accessibility of sport to women and girls. The Commission also supports various projects to promote sport among women by providing funds, they encourage women in leadership and management positions by organising workshops, seminars, talks, mentoring and training. The Commission oversees the implementation of the gender equality guidelines of the IOC Movement and report the status.

(c) The Olympic Committee in its continuous endeavour to bring equality in sports and through sports and games, introduced the IOC Gender Equality Review Project in March 2017. Through this project it carried out a comprehensive review of gender equality in Olympic Movement and introduced a 25 bold and action oriented recommendations which covered sport-related matters of participation, portrayal and funding, and other broader matters around the role and opportunities for women in organisational

governance and the inclusive organisational cultures and diversity in leadership, supporting women in all these areas. The purpose of this project was to bring about actionable solutions to enhance women role, their participation in sport and achieve gender equality in and off the field.

4. (a) Human Rights and Refugees:- The IOC has upheld human rights by promoting and respecting them in all its spheres as a promoter and organiser of Olympic Games and as the leader of the Olympic Movement. The IOC within its ambit strives to protect and respect human rights in line with international guidelines and standards. The IOC sets its standards from information and standards provided by UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO and other international organizations, in its approach to human rights like responsible sourcing and providing safe sport for athletes etc.

(b) IOC Refugees Team:- As the world witnesses one of the greatest refugee crisis of the world, the Olympic Committee with its commitment to solidarity, equality and respect for Human Rights has nurtured a 10 member Refugees Olympic Team from countries like Ethiopia, Sudan, Syria and Democratic Republic of Congo for the Olympic Games Rio 2016. Similarly, another team of athletes competing in 12 games are scheduled to participate in the Olympic Games Tokyo, 2020. This team is considered a symbol and message of hope for the millions of displaced around the world. With the Refugee Athlete Support programme, the IOC supports the athletes in their sport and helps to provide them training with the aim to participate in future Olympic games and future career. Through the Olympic Scholarship for Refugee Athletes, the Committee selected athletes and provided them with training and other resources needed for preparation and participation for high level games. These athletes were selected based on a number of criteria, sporting performance, and their refugee status as confirmed by the UNHCR.

1. Sustainability:- One of the three pillars of IOC Agenda is *Sustainability*. The Olympic Committee has developed some strategy guidelines and documents for environmental sustainability and drawn responsibilities and commitment that sport can play towards the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The IOC as an Organisation, Owner of Olympic Games and Leader of the Olympic

Movement can contribute to sustainability in spheres of Infrastructure and Natural Sites, Sourcing and Resource Management, Mobility, Workforce and Climate. The IOC has brought out its 2018 Sustainability Report which not only states the measures it has taken as an organization and the Leader of Olympic Movement but also developed strategies, policies, toolkits to promote and support sustainability in all spheres of sport and its related activities and stands by the belief and commitment that sport can influence, contribute to environment protection, preservation and its sustainability.

The Olympic Committee and the Olympic Movement has been able to identify humanitarian, social and environmental issues of the society. It tirelessly tried to promote equality, justice, respect, education through the medium of sport. It has aligned and pledged itself with other international organizations to help mitigate and uplift crisis and promote the spirit of Olympism in the sporting community, through its national and international networks worldwide. It is therefore, recognized that sport has that unrivalled capacity that can motivate and inspire people and, the Olympic Movement has the duty and the opportunity to contribute actively, in line with its vision of : “ Building a better world through sport”. However, much needs to be done and great resources are needed before an ideal world can be established as envisioned in the Olympic values.

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