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### **Lecture Title**

### **Indian Olympic Association**

#### **Introduction**

Hello and welcome to this special module on physical education. Today we are talking about Indian Olympic Association.

The Indian Olympic Association is the body responsible for selecting athletes to represent India at the Olympic Games, Asian Games and other international athletic meets and for managing the Indian teams at the events. It also acts as the Indian Commonwealth Games Association, responsible for selecting athletes to represent India at the Commonwealth Games.

Background and early years:

The background behind the creation of the Indian Olympic Association was related to India's participation in the 1920 and 1924 Olympics. After the 1920 Games, the committee sending the team to these games met, and, on the advice of Sir Dorab Tata, invited Dr. Noehren (Physical Education Director of YMCA India) to be secretary, along with AS Bhagwat, of the provisional Indian Olympic Committee; Dorab Tata would serve as its president. Subsequently, in 1923-24, a provisional All India Olympic Committee was formed, and the All India Olympic Games (that later became the National Games of India) were held in Feb 1924. Eight athletes from these games were selected to represent India at the 1924 Paris Olympics, accompanied by manager Harry Crowe Buck. This gave impetus to the development and institutionalization of sports in India, and, in 1927, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), was created at the initiative of Harry Crowe Buck and Dr. A. G. Noehren (both of the Madras (YMCA) College of Physical Education). Sir Dorab Tata was important in financing and supporting the movement and became the first Indian Olympic Association president in 1927. Messrs Buck and Noehren travelled across India and helped many states organise their Olympic associations. Noehren was the first Secretary and G. D. Sondhi was the first assistant secretary of the Indian Olympic Association, and, after Noehren resigned in 1938, Sondhi and S.M. Moinul Haq became the Secretary and Joint Secretary of the Indian Olympic Association.

And so the Indian Olympic Association was formed in 1927, and since that year was officially recognised by the International Olympic Committee as India's national Olympic organisation. In 1928, Maharaja Bhupindra Singh took over as Indian Olympic Association president.

### **Early Tasks: Sending Teams to the Olympics:**

**Sending Teams to the Olympics:** In its first decade, the Indian Olympic Association selected sportspersons to represent India at the Olympic Games in 1928, 1932, and 1936. Subsequently, by 1946-47, the Indian Olympic Association took responsibility only to send the Indian team to the Olympics (principally, this meant arranging transport, board, and accommodation), while the separate federations for each sport were responsible for selecting and training competitors for their sport. Reflecting this, ahead of the 1948 Olympics, the IOA Council agreed that a team representing athletics, swimming, weight lifting, wrestling, boxing, football, and hockey, with officials for each of these sports, and a Chief Manager, would be entered for the 1948 Olympics. And so, from 1948 onward, India began sending teams representing several sports – each selected by its respective sports federation – to the Olympics.

**Securing Funding:** One of the Indian Olympic Association's main early challenges was to secure funding, so that it could send the national team to the Olympics and finance the related costs of transport, room, and board. It obtained funding from the Indian government, from the state governments, and from various state sports federations.

Illustrating this, IOA President Yadavindra Singh's appeal for funding in 1948 stated: "We need about 3 Lacs of rupees to finance" the Indian Olympic team for the London Olympics; that "the youth taking part in these games become ambassadors of goodwill" for India; and that "careful selection, intensive training and proper equipment is most essential" to field a competitive team, but that the Indian Olympic Association is "greatly handicapped for want of sufficient funds" for these tasks.

The Indian Olympic Association thus undertook wider outreach with several national sports federations, and essentially became a clearinghouse that coordinated the sending of multiple sports teams – each selected by their respective sports federations – to the Olympics.

**The National Games:** The Indian Olympic Association had one other major responsibility: that of holding the biennial National Games (Indian Olympics). It recognised, in the 1920s-1940s, that the promotion of sports in India needed a National Games, because there was no overall national sports federation of India. Instead, there were separate national federations for each sport, such as athletics, swimming, basketball, volleyball, wrestling, weightlifting, cycling, boxing, football. These sports federations essentially held their national championships at the Indian National Games.

### **Recent History**

On 4 December 2012, the International Olympic Committee suspended the IOA on the basis of corruption, government interference, and not following guidelines of the IOC. Several members of the IOA have been charged with crimes. The IOA was formally banned for not following the Olympic Charter in their elections, instead following the Indian government's Sports Code. The IOA held elections under the Indian Sports Code due to a directive from the Delhi High Court. On 15 May 2013, International Olympic Committee (IOC) decided to lift the ban on the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as Indian representatives from the government and sports bodies reached an agreement with IOC officials. India still did not have its three competitors play under the national flag at the 2014 Olympics. On 9 February, an election was held to choose a head of the IOA. Abhay Singh Chautala and Lalit Bhanot were ineligible due to having a court charge against them. The President of the World Squash Federation Narayana Ramachandran was instead elected.

India first participated in Olympics in 1900 in Paris. The country was represented by Norman Pritchard, an Anglo Indian who was holidaying in Paris during that time. The Indian Olympic Association is responsible for the preparation and participation of competitors in the Olympic Games as well as in Regional events like Commonwealth and Asian Games. There is a separate federation at national level in each game/sport which assists the Indian Olympic Association and preparation of sportsmen.

The selection of sportsmen is generally carried out on the basis of performance at national level. However, at times, special selection trials are also held to choose the competitors for participation in the Olympic Games and other international events. After initial selection, the competitors are required to attend training camps. The national federations are assisted by the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports, Patiala, which provides intensive training for athletes. The selected competitors are then recommended by the national federations to the IOA for official sponsorship for participation in the Olympic Games.

A special feature of the Indian Olympic Association is that, in addition to the national federation for each sport, there are State Olympic Associations in various States in the country. The State bodies controlling the different sports are affiliated to the national federations and to the State Olympic Associations. The aim of the State Olympic Associations is to ensure the promotion of sports in their respective States, in conjunction with the State bodies for the different games and sports. The overall responsibility for participation in the Olympic Games rests with the Indian Olympic Association. The other responsibilities undertaken by the IOA are as follows:

- Deciding the organisation of National Games
- Maintaining liaison between the Government of India and member federations or associations
- Protecting the amateur status of sportsmen
- Promoting and developing the Olympic Movement

#### **Foundation of IOA**

Sir Dorabji Tata towards the end of 1919 first sowed the seeds for establishing a Sports body at National level for promoting the Olympic Sport in united India. Sir Dorabji Tata with the support of Dr.A.G.Noehren then Director of YMCA established the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) in 1927.

Though no National Olympic Committee was formed in India, Sir Dorabji Tata fielded a token contingent of 6 members i.e. four athletes and two wrestlers in the Antwerp Olympic Games in 1920. During these Games Sir Dorabji Tata was elected as a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and thus became the first IOC member from India. Upon his return to India from Antwerp Olympic Games, Sir Dorabji Tata, in association with Dr. A. G. Noehren began to search throughout India for talent in athletics. This talent search aroused national interest in athletics and helped to promote the organisation of athletic meetings in all States and provinces in India.

In February 1924, the first ever Inter-State Athletic meet was organised in Delhi and an eight - member Athletic team selected during this meet was sent for the Paris Olympic Games in 1924. By 1927, the IOA decided to hold regular inter-State Games and since then National championships in all Sports are being held in various states of India.

Sir Dorabji Tata and Dr. Noehren ran the IOA activities until 1928. The mantle was then handed over to Maharaja Bhupindra Singh of Patiala (1928-1938), and Prof. Guru Dutt Sondhi (1928-1952) respectively. Sir Dorabji Tata continued as IOC member in India until his death in 1931. In 1932 Prof. Guru Dutt Sondhi, who was also the Indian representative within the International Amateur Athletic Federation, assumed his responsibilities.

IOA the apex Sports Organization of Olympic Sport in the country is responsible for the Indian contingent's participation in the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games (Outdoor-Indoor-Beach) and South Asian Games. Each Olympic and Non-Olympic Sport has a Federation at the National level and are recognized/affiliated by IOA.

The selection of the National teams is done by the respective National Federations and then recommended to IOA for official sponsorship for participation in the Games being conducted under the auspices of the IOC, OCA, CGF and SAG. A special feature of the Indian Olympic Association is that, the National Federations and the State Olympic Associations are affiliated/recognised by it. The main task of the State Olympic Associations is to Promote the Olympic Sport and to ensure coordination among the State Sports Associations.

The most important task in addition to sponsoring the National teams for Multi Sport Games is the staging of the National Games.

### **Objectives and Conclusion**

The India Olympic Association is formed with the following objectives:

1. To develop and promote the Olympic movement and amateur Sport.
2. To promote and encourage the physical, moral and cultural education of the youth of the nation for the development of character, good health and good citizenship.
3. To enforce all rules and regulations of the International Olympic Committee and the Indian Olympic Association.
4. To enforce and defend the exclusive right of the Association to the use of the Olympic flag and Olympic insignia, confining their use and as far as possible, that of the words, "Olympic" and "Olympiad" to activities concerning games.
5. To be the official organization in complete and sole charge of all Olympic matters in the country.
6. To educate the public of the country the value of amateurism in sport.
7. In cooperation with National Sports Federation/Associations to guard and enforce amateur rules.
8. To maintain the highest ideals of amateurism and to promote interest therein, particularly in connection with the Olympic Games and other Games under the patronage of the I.O.C as well as I.O.A.
9. To have full and complete jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to the participation of India in the Olympic Games and other Games under the patronage of the I.O.C as well as I.O.As.
10. In cooperation with National Sports Federations/Associations to organize and control the teams that will represent India in the Olympic Games and other Games under the patronage of the I.O.C as well as I.O.A.
11. To undertake with the assistance National Sports Federations/Associations the financing, Management, transportation, Maintenance and welfare of teams from India taking part in the olympic Games and other Games under the patronage of the I.O.C as well as I.O.A.
12. To certify the amateur status of competitors of India for such International competitions as require such certification.
13. To stimulate the interest of the people of country in the promotion of sports and games in the Olympic programme, and to work for the formation of State Olympic Association for the development of sports and games within a State and National Sports Federations for games and Sports in the Olympic Programme.
14. To act as the channel of communication between National Sports Federations and the Government of India for financial or other assistance to the Federations.

15. To admit the membership of State Olympic Associations and National Sports Federation which shall be required to submit their annual reports and audited statement of accounts to the I.O.A. for information.

16. To take disciplinary action against any Federation for misbehavior or any other undesirable activity bringing discredit to the country and sport.

17. To do all other things that may be necessary or expedient to promote the development of amateur sports and games in the country and for the conduct of its business.

Now let us summarize the main points. I hope this information was of some use to all of you. Thank you so much for watching.