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Article For Reading:

Go, kho kho, go: On boosting sport with a rural heart

Kho kho is not, by any stretch of imagination, among the world's most popular sports. Even in India, where the game is said to have originated several centuries ago, it has not yet caught the imagination. Not many would have noticed India winning the men's and women's titles at the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup in New Delhi on Sunday. Pratik Waikar's men and Priyanka Ingle's women flourished but their collective achievements should not be cause to gloss over the fact that kho kho is not a global sport yet. Indeed, the conduct of the World Cup and India winning both the titles could offer a boost to this particular game with a rural heart. Since India is not really a major power in international sport at large, any world title is a welcome addition to the not-so-overflowing cupboard. There are, of course, a few sports in which India is a superpower, such as cricket and chess. Indian cricket may be going through its lowest phase in recent times — notwithstanding the **triumph** in the T20 World Cup last year — but in the mind game on 64 squares, India's Grandmasters have been authoring one success story after another, the latest being D. Gukesh winning the World chess championship and Koneru Humpy regaining the women's World rapid championship.

India's brilliant minds, however, have not received the **acclaim** or support they deserve, especially after their historic double gold at the Chess Olympiad back in September, from the government or corporate houses. The government could do a lot to raise the profile of games such as kho kho, chess and Olympic disciplines. The disappointment at the Paris Olympics last year, where India failed to win even a single gold and finished 71st, below Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan, was another **stark** reminder of the state of Indian sport. India won six medals but its performance was below expectations. India's various sports federations need to review their own **functioning**. And they could, in fact, learn lessons from how the Board of Control for Cricket in India, for all the criticism directed against it, is running its sport, improving **infrastructure** and sharing the growth in revenue with players. India may largely be a single-sport country, unlike the United States or Australia, but a game such as kabaddi, with its Pro Kabaddi League, has shown that there is scope for Indian sport on television beyond cricket. The governments, at the Centre and the States, could also do better by developing infrastructure and **nurturing** varied sport such as kho kho. It is also time to find out if Khelo India is **justifying** the huge budgetary spend.

Summarization:

It highlights the need to promote rural sports like Kho Kho in India, which recently won men's and women's titles at the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup. It criticizes India's poor Olympic performance, urges better funding for non-cricket sports, and emphasizes learning from cricket's success in infrastructure and revenue-sharing.

Vocabulary –

1. Acclaim (noun) प्रशंसा

Meaning: Enthusiastic and public praise.

Synonym: Applause, commendation

Antonym: Criticism, disapproval

Example: India's sports achievements often do not receive the acclaim they deserve.

2. Infrastructure (noun) आधारभूत संरचना

Meaning: The basic physical and organizational structures needed for the operation of a society or enterprise.

Synonym: Framework, foundation

Antonym: Disorganization, dismantlement

Example: The government is improving infrastructure for rural sports.

3. Nurturing (verb) पोषण करना

Meaning: To care for and encourage the growth or development of someone or something.

Synonym: Fostering, cultivating

Antonym: Neglecting, ignoring

Example: The government should focus on nurturing rural sports talent.

4. Triumph (noun) विजय

Meaning: A great victory or achievement.

Synonym: Success, win

Antonym: Failure, defeat

Example: India's triumph in the Kho Kho World Cup was a proud moment.

5. Functioning (noun) कार्यप्रणाली

Meaning: The way something operates or works.

Synonym: Operation, performance

Antonym: Malfunctioning, disrepair

Example: Sports federations need to review their functioning.

6. Reinforcing (verb) मजबूत करना

Meaning: To strengthen or support something.

Synonym: Bolstering, fortifying

Antonym: Weakening, undermining

Example: Reinforcing sports infrastructure is crucial for better performance.

7. Overlook (verb) नजरअंदाज करना

Meaning: Fail to notice something.

Synonym: Ignore, neglect

Antonym: Notice, acknowledge

Example: Rural sports should not be overlooked by the government.

8. Stark (adjective) साफ़

Meaning: Severe or bare in appearance or outline; complete or utter.

Synonym: Absolute, harsh

Antonym: Subtle, mild

Example: The stark reminder of India's poor Olympic performance calls for action.

9. Revamp (verb) सुधार करना

Meaning: To make changes to improve something.

Synonym: Renovate, upgrade

Antonym: Maintain, preserve

Example: India's sports federations need to revamp their policies.

10. Justifying (verb) औचित्य सिद्ध करना

Meaning: To show or prove to be right or reasonable.

Synonym: Validating, defending

Antonym: Opposing, denying

Example: It's time to justify the large budgets allocated to Khelo India.

Idioms and phrases:

1. At the helm (संचालन करना)

Meaning: In charge or in a position of leadership.

Synonym: In control, leading

Antonym: Subordinate, following

Example: The new coach is at the helm of the sports federation.

2. Raise the bar (phrase) मानक बढ़ाना

Meaning: To set a higher standard or level of quality.

Synonym: Improve, elevate

Antonym: Lower the bar

Example: Winning the Kho Kho World Cup has raised the bar for rural sports.

Phrasal Verbs:

1. Step up (phrasal verb) तेज करना या जिम्मेदारी लेना

Meaning: To take action or responsibility.

Synonym: Increase, take charge

Antonym: Back down, avoid

Example: The government needs to step up efforts to promote rural sports.

2. Fall short (phrasal verb) अपर्याप्त होना

Meaning: To fail to reach a desired standard or amount.

Synonym: Lack, fail

Antonym: Succeed, achieve

Example: India's Olympic performance fell short of expectations.

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