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Transforming India's Sports Ecosystem: An Analysis of Policy Frameworks, Institutional Governance, Developmental Challenges and Emerging Priorities

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Abstract

India's sports ecosystem has seen a massive transformation through policy reforms, institution-building, infrastructure expansion, talent discovery and rising participation in national and international athletic events. However, sporting success continues to grapple with longstanding issues of inadequate infrastructure, geographical disparity, budgetary restrictions, governance inefficiencies, low grassroots engagement and insufficient athlete support. The paper looks at the changing contours of India's sports ecosystem, in particular when considering policy frameworks, institutional governance, developmental issues and rising goals. The paper is descriptive and analytical in nature and major initiatives like *Khelo* India, Fit India Movement, Target Olympic Podium Scheme, National Sports Policy 2025 have been assessed. Secondary data from government reports, sports policies, institutional publications and relevant literature have been used. It investigates critically issues of institutional coordination, public investment, sports infrastructure, talent development, gender inclusion, sports education and international competitiveness. The analysis points out to the need for transparent government, stronger institutional accountability, fair resource allocation, scientific training, technological innovation and effective public-private partnerships. The paper concludes that a framework of integrated, inclusive and athlete-centric sports development, supported by evidence-based policymaking, institutional reforms and sustained investment can only build a globally competitive sporting nation India, in alignment with the national vision of *Viksit Bharat* @2047.

Keywords: *Sports Ecosystem, Sports Policy, Institutional Governance, Sports Infrastructure, Athlete Development, Sporting Excellence towards Viksit Bharat @2047.*

Introduction

Sports are a key element in human resource development, public health, social integration, national identity and economic development. Apart from leisure and competition, sports also contribute to physical fitness, psychological well-being, discipline, leadership, female empowerment and international cooperation. In modern cultures the growth of sport is more and more seen as a sign of institutional capacity, policy efficacy and national competitiveness. In 2015, the United Nations (2015) acknowledged the significance of sports to sustainable development, social inclusion, health, education and empowerment through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Similarly, the World Health Organization (WHO 2020) highlights the value of regular physical activity in reducing non-communicable diseases and enhancing quality of life.

India has huge potential to flourish in sports thanks to its huge youth population, rich athletic traditions, increasing number of educational institutions and increased investment in sports infrastructure. Traditional sports such as wrestling, kabaddi, archery and indigenous games have historically contributed to the country's sporting culture. Modern competitive sports have increasingly come to the fore via participation in the Olympic Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and other international competitions. India has increased its sporting performance in numerous disciplines. This shows how important scientific training, institutional backing, professional coaching and targeted athlete development are becoming. However, building a sustainable and globally competitive sports ecosystem requires comprehensive reforms that go

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beyond international medal wins to include grassroots participation, accessibility, institutional governance and long-term athlete development (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports [MYAS], 2024).The idea of a sports ecosystem is an intricate system of government agencies, sports federations, educational institutions, training academies, coaches, athletes, infrastructure suppliers, business organisations, sponsors and local communities. Its success will depend on coordinated policies, proper funding, transparent governance, professional management and fair access to sporting activities. Institutional assistance for sports development involves talent identification, specialised coaching, training centers and athlete support procedures (SAI, 2025). But the effectiveness of these initiatives depends on institutional coordination, resource utilisation and continuous participation among the diverse regions and socio-economic categories.

The sports policy environment in India has moved over time from a somewhat narrow framework of physical education and competitive sports to a broader framework of grassroots development, talent promotion, infrastructure expansion and international sporting excellence. An important institutional step in the promotion of organised sports was the setting up of the Sports Authority of India in 1984. Then came the National Sports Policy, 2001, which laid down a framework for increasing participation and boosting competition performance. Recently, programs like *Khelo I*ndia, the Fit India Movement, and the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) have been launched to increase sports participation, improve training facilities, identify prospective athletes, and boost international competitiveness (MYAS, 2024; MYAS, 2025).One of the major developments in the sports policy environment in India was the adoption of the National Sports Policy 2025 (also known as *Khelo* Bharat Niti 2025) which superseded the National Sports Policy, 2001. The new policy provides foundation for the promotion of sporting excellence, economic development, social development, mass engagement and the integration of sports into education. It puts particular focus on grassroots infrastructure, talent identification, professional coaching, sports science, inclusion and institutional partnerships. The policy is also aimed at increasing India's preparation to host mega international sporting events and the wider goal of becoming as a sporting powerhouse (Government of India, 2025; MYAS, 2026). Institutional governance continues to be a significant factor in determining the efficacy of India's sports ecosystem. There are number of stakeholders in sports administration including Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Sports Authority of India, Indian Olympic Association, National Sports Federations, State Sports Departments, educational institutions and private sporting groups. While this institutional structure creates potential for broad participation and resource mobilisation, it also raises issues relating to coordination, accountability, financial management, transparency and administrative efficiency.

The National Sports Governance Act, 2025 and other regulatory developments are important strides toward strengthening institutional accountability, ethical administration, athlete representation and dispute-resolution mechanisms in Indian sports (Government of India, 2025; MYAS, 2026). The sports sector in India, despite large policy measures and institutional growth, is facing a host of developmental issues. These include poor sports infrastructure in rural and economically disadvantaged areas, regional disparities in access to training facilities, inadequate financial support, limited availability of qualified coaches, poor integration of sports with formal education, and unequal opportunities for women and persons with disabilities. Additionally, the increasing professionalism in competitive sports calls for a heightened focus on sports science, nutrition, sports medicine, injury prevention, psychological support, performance analytics and post-retirement employment prospects. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (2024-25) emphasises the need to enhance infrastructure, athlete development, and institutional support as an essential component of India's sports

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development strategy. Another worry is the link between public funding, institutional performance and measurable sporting outcomes. More investment in sports infrastructure and athlete support programs could boost performance, but good implementation, monitoring and evaluation are critical for sustained sporting greatness. Hence, transparent resource allocation, decentralised decision-making, community participation and collaboration between government agencies, educational institutions and business groups are critical.

The development of an inclusive sporting culture can be facilitated by strengthening school and university sports, building district-level talent identification methods and enhancing opportunities for disadvantaged communities (MYAS, 2025; Government of India, 2025).Technological innovation, digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence, sports analytics and scientific performance management are rapidly impacting athlete development and competitive strategies in the evolving global sports environment. Hence, India needs to strengthen research institutions, sports universities, coaching systems and technology-supported training facilities. Athlete welfare, ethical governance and sustainable funding are equally vital as gender sensitive policies and disability inclusive infrastructure." These initiatives are in line with the objectives of National Sports Policy 2025 which aims to build a stronger, more inclusive and performance-oriented sporting ecosystem (Government of India, 2025). The Viksit Bharat @2047 vision provides an essential long-term development context for the transformation of India's sports ecosystem. Sport may be an enabler to this national vision by contributing to improvements in public health, youth development, employment generation, sports tourism, entrepreneurship, social inclusion and worldwide recognition. But moving from fragmented programs to an integrated, evidence-based and athlete-centred development framework is a prerequisite to sporting excellence. Special focus should be paid to enhancing institutional capacity, fostering involvement from the grass roots, improving the use of infrastructure, stimulating public-private partnerships and training athletes who are competitive worldwide.

The present paper attempts to analyse the growth of India's sports development framework, key government policies and programs, institutional arrangements, governance reform and ongoing developmental obstacles in this backdrop. It also points to increasing priorities including sports infrastructure, talent development, financial investment, technology innovation, inclusivity and international sporting competitiveness. The study aims to provide policy orientated insights and recommendations to develop a sustainable, inclusive, transparent and globally competitive sports ecosystem in India.

Review of Literature

The growth of sports has become an essential issue in public policy, institutional governance, human resource development and international competitiveness. Existing literature highlights effective sports policies, infrastructure development, financial investment, talent identification, scientific training and institutional responsibility as important for creating sustainable sporting performance (De Bosscher et al. (2015) created the framework of Sports Policy Factors Leading to International Sporting Success (SPLISS) in Successful Elite Sport Policies. In their comparative study of 15 countries, they found that coordinated sports policy, financial support, talent identification, coaching, training facilities, scientific research and international competition experience were all factors in determining top sporting achievement. The report offers a framework for assessing national sports development systems and proposing institutional priorities. In their paper Sport Policy in India, Clarke and Mondal (2022) analysed the growth of India's sports development system, institutional arrangements, finance mechanisms and policy difficulties. They noted that despite India's sporting heritage and huge demographic potential, the evolution of an integrated sports ecosystem has been

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somewhat modest. Major obstacles found in the study include poor infrastructure, limited financial resources, governance issues, inadequate professional mentoring and uneven possibilities for involvement. The authors stressed the need for a rigorous assessment of sports policies and institutional effectiveness.

According to the World Health Organization (2020), physical activity and involvement in sports are essential for physical health, emotional well-being and prevention of non-communicable illnesses. Its principles promote the integration of physical exercise in public health policy, educational institutions and community development programs. These results underscore the relevance of sports development beyond competitive success (WHO, 2020). Rastogi and Dhanda (2025) discussed the institutional and legal issues of Indian sports governance. Their investigation raised issues of administrative accountability, sport disputes, regulatory shortcomings and decision making in sporting organisations. The report recommended the establishment of a more robust regulatory framework to promote transparency, fairness and effective conflict resolution.

The Government of India (2025) in the National Sports Policy 2025 identified five major elements of transformation of sports including excellence on global stage, economic development, social development, mass engagement and integration of sports with education. The policy saw sports as a tool for national development and demanded better infrastructure, talent development, institutional collaborations and scientific training. Similarly, the National Sports Governance Act, 2025, set a regulatory framework for improving openness, institutional accountability, athlete representation and conflict resolution in sports administration (Government of India, 2025). These changes are a reflection of the rising relevance of governance quality in India's sporting growth. The literature reviewed reveals that sports development is dependent on the successful integration of governmental initiatives, institutional capability, infrastructure, athlete-support systems and inclusive participation. However, a holistic assessment connecting these characteristics with the long-term sporting competitiveness of India and the national vision of *Viksit Bharat* @2047 is required.

Research Gaps

Although there is a growing academic and policy interest in sports development in India, significant research gaps exist. First, prior studies often focus on sports regulations, infrastructure, institutional governance and athlete performance independently, rather than examining their interrelationships within an integrated sports ecosystem. Second, there is inadequate comprehensive assessment of the execution and performance of important programs like *Khelo* India, TOPS and Fit India Movement especially at the state, district and grassroots levels. Thirdly, there is a lack of comparative research on regional disparities, rural-urban variations, gender inequalities and access to excellent training facilities. Fourth, the links between public investment, institutional responsibility, athlete development and international athletic success demand additional systematic investigation. Fifth, the consequences of the National Sports Policy 2025 and National Sports Governance Act, 2025, especially when considering institutional reform and implementation, must be constantly assessed. Finally, there is a dearth of research linking sports development strategies with the broader goals of inclusive economic growth, youth empowerment and international competitiveness under Viksit Bharat @2047 (Clarke & Mondal, 2022; Government of India, 2025).

Objectives of the Study

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The principal objective of the study is to examine India's evolving sports ecosystem, focusing on policy frameworks, institutional governance, developmental challenges and emerging priorities. The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the evolution, structure and major components of India's sports ecosystem.

2. To analyse national sports policies, government initiatives and institutional arrangements for sports development.

3. To assess sports governance, infrastructure development, public investment and institutional coordination.

4. To examine talent identification, athlete development, scientific training and international sporting competitiveness.

5. To identify developmental challenges, regional disparities, financial constraints and issues of social inclusion.

6. To suggest policy reforms and emerging strategic priorities for achieving sustainable sporting excellence towards *Viksit Bharat @2047*.

Research Methodology

The research methodology used in the study is descriptive; analytical and policy review orientated with an emphasis on secondary sources. The information has been derived from published reports of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Sports Authority of India, government policy documents, parliamentary publications, National Sports Policy 2025, National Sports Governance Act 2025, *Khelo* India program reports, international sports organisations and relevant academic literature. The examination covers evolution of sports ecosystem of India, institutional governance arrangements, infrastructural development, talent identification, athlete-support mechanisms and international sporting triumphs. A comparative and thematic approach is recommended to study policy objectives, program implementation, institutional constraints and evolving developmental priorities. Where comparable data exist, performance can be assessed by descriptive statistics, percentage changes, trends in sports expenditure, infrastructure coverage and international medal successes. This study is concerned with the national sports development, especially the policies and institutional reforms from 2014–2026, while looking back to the previous advancements for historical comparison. Its conclusions are meant to suggest strategic goals rather than causal links between particular governmental actions and sporting performance.

India's Sports Ecosystem: Structure, Development and Emerging Dimensions

The sports ecosystem is a linked institutional and developmental framework, which includes government agencies, sports federations, educational institutions, training centers, athletes, coaches, private organisations, sponsors and community stakeholders. Its main aim is to encourage mass involvement, to recognise sports talent, to develop professional athletes and to improve national and international sporting performance. The sports ecosystem in India has gradually transformed from a predominantly government-supported institutional structure to a more diverse ecosystem comprising public investment, private sector participation, sports academies, professional leagues, sports science institutions and community-based initiatives. Clarke and Mondal (2022) highlighted that the sporting system in India is marked by the engagement of government agencies, commercial sporting institutions and non-profit groups. However, the system's effectiveness

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depends on cooperation between stakeholders, fair access to infrastructure and sustainable financing. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports provides the national policy direction and the Sports Authority of India assists in talent discovery, athlete training, facility development and competitive preparation. National Sports Federations are responsible for the development and administration of individual sport disciplines and for compliance with appropriate governance standards. The *Khelo* India program has aided in institutionalising grassroots involvement and talent development in sports competitions, academies, training centers and infrastructural efforts (MYAS, 2026). In the year 2026, the Government of India also noted that the institutional network consisted of roughly 1,067 *Khelo* India Centers along with 35 State Centers of Excellence. Furthermore, as of June 2026, more than 23,000 athletes were supported under the many components of *Khelo I*ndia. These trends suggest the growth of formalised options for athlete development. However, the geographic spread, use and efficacy of facilities needs to be monitored continually. However, India's sports ecosystem is still riddled with structural issues in terms of disparity in distribution of infrastructure, lack of access in rural areas, poor coaching facilities, lack of community participation and differences in financial and institutional capacity amongst states. So, an integrated network integrating schools, colleges, universities, district sports centers, state academies, professional institutions and national training facilities needs to be developed to strengthen the ecosystem. A well-functioning sports ecosystem must present a clear continuum of development from grassroots to global sports greatness.

Sports Policy Environment in India

Sports policies provide the institutional framework to set the national sporting priorities, provide public resources, create infrastructure, support athletes and improve international competitiveness. The sports policy framework in India has evolved via various key efforts, including National Sports Policy 1984, National Sports Policy 2001, National Sports Development Code 2011, *Khelo* India program and National Sports Policy 2025. The National Sports Policy 2001 concentrated on mass-based involvement in sports, development of talent, improvement in infrastructure and enhancing international competitiveness. Thereafter, the National Sports Development Code 2011 attempted to improve the norms of governance and institutional responsibility in National Sports Federations (Clarke & Mondal, 2022). With the adoption of the National Sports Policy 2025 (*Khelo Bharat Niti* 2025), a major policy shift took place, replacing the National Sports Policy 2001. The new policy emphasises five important developmental pillars, namely, global sporting excellence, economic development, social development, mass engagement and integration of sports with education (Government of India, 2025).

Table 1: Major Sports Policies and Programmes in India

Policy/Programme	Year	Major Objectives
National Sports Policy	1984	Promotion of sports participation and improvement of national sporting standards
National Sports Policy	2001	Infrastructure development, grassroots sports promotion and international excellence
National Sports Development Code	2011	Governance standards, transparency and accountability in sports administration

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Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)	2014	Specialised support for athletes with Olympic and Paralympic medal potential
Khelo India Programme	2017	Grassroots participation, talent identification, infrastructure and competitive development
Fit India Movement	2019	Physical fitness, public awareness and community participation
Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI)	2024	Systematic identification and assessment of young sporting talent
National Sports Policy (*Khelo Bharat Niti*)	2025	Integrated sports development, excellence, inclusion and sports-related economic growth
National Sports Governance Act	2025	Institutional accountability, athlete representation, ethical governance and dispute resolution

Sources: Clarke and Mondal (2022); Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (2025–2026); Government of India (2025).

The changing policy landscape is indicative of the movement toward integration of grassroots development, athlete welfare, competitive performance and economic activities associated to sports. But this needs more coordination between national and state governments, educational institutions, sports federations and private-sector groups. Policy priorities should include decentralisation of sports planning, performance metrics, evidence-based funding allocation and regular program review.

Institutional Governance of Sports in India

Institutional governance is a major part of sports development and includes organization structure, administrative responsibility, financial management, transparency, regulatory compliance and athlete representation. The sports governance structure in India comprises the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Sports Authority of India, Indian Olympic Association, National Sports Federations, State Sports Departments and other public and commercial sporting organisations. The Ministry provides policy guidance and financial assistance while the Sports Authority of India coordinates key parts of training, sports infrastructure, talent development and top athlete preparation. National Sports Federations are responsible for individual sporting disciplines, organising contests and development activities. Nevertheless, the management of sport has been traditionally characterised by institutional fragmentation, duplication of functions, restricted transparency, governance conflicts, lack of competent management and deficiencies in financial responsibility. According to Clarke and Mondal (2022), India's poor performance in sports was due to factors such as poor governance and lack of cooperation among institutions. Rastogi and Dhanda (2025) also highlighted the necessity of clear legal rules and methods for the resolution of sports-related conflicts. The National Sports Governance Act, 2025, is a major step in the direction of building a better statutory governance structure. The Act allows for sports governance reforms to address issues of accountability, institutional monitoring, conflict resolution and athlete representation. It also acknowledges the need to protect athletes and enhance ethical governance (Government of India, 2025). But legislative reforms effectiveness depends on execution, institutional ability, stakeholders' cooperation and enforcement. The future priorities for governance are professional management

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of sports federations, transparent selection processes, independent financial audits, athlete representation, grievance redressal, gender inclusion and performance-based evaluation of athletic organisations. A type of governance that is decentralised yet accountable will enhance cooperation across institutions at national, state and district levels, while enhancing the accessibility and efficiency of sports development programs.

Sports Infrastructure Development

Sports infrastructure is the physical and technical basis for the discovery of talent, regular training, preparation for competitions and mass involvement. It includes playgrounds, multi-purpose sports complexes, stadiums, indoor facilities, swimming pools, athletics tracks, sports academies, specialist training centers, sports science laboratories and rehabilitation facilities. Infrastructure is an important component in promoting participation and competitive success. However, the development of infrastructure should not be measured just by the quantity of facilities built, but also by their accessibility, utilisation, maintenance, professional staffing and the quality of services supplied. "Development of infrastructure is an important part of India's sporting transformation," said the *Khelo* India program. Its way is the construction and improvement of sports facilities and the establishment of institutional training networks (MYAS, 2026). Investment is rising yet there are still large gaps between urban centers and smaller towns, rural areas and economically disadvantaged populations. Lack of suitable playground, sports equipment, competent coaches and financial resources is a common problem faced by schools and universities. The lack of reliable district level infrastructure assessment also impedes planning effectively. Infrastructural development in the future should therefore be based on regionally balanced investment, the use of existing facilities, reinforcement of district sports centers, and sharing of institutional facilities by schools and communities. Additional opportunities may exist for the construction, maintenance and professional management of sporting facilities through public-private partnerships. Special emphasis should be placed on accessible infrastructure for women, persons with disabilities and athletes from underprivileged communities. Connecting sports infrastructure planning with urban development, rural development and education policies will contribute to developing a more inclusive and sustainable sports ecosystem.

Athlete Development, Talent Identification and Scientific Training

Athlete development is a continuum of talent identification, physical conditioning, specialist coaching, competitive exposure, nutritional support, psychological preparation, medical aid and career development. A strong athlete development system gives opportunity for individuals to advance from school and community engagement to district, state, national and international contests. According to De Bosscher et al. (2015), elite sport success is achieved via coordinated policy support, talent development, coaching quality, scientific research, training facilities and access to high-level events. In India, *Khelo* India program and Target Olympic Podium Scheme are the major institutional structures for athlete development. *Khelo* India is about involvement at the grass-root level, talent discovery and structured training possibilities, whereas TOPS is focused support to those athletes who have the potential to succeed in large international tournaments. In March 2024, the *Khelo* India Rising Talent Identification program was introduced, bringing to a more systematic process of discovering young sporting talent. As per government reports, till June 2026, more than 1.8 lakh talent assessments had been conducted under the program (Government of India, 2026). However, unequal access to specialised coaching, financial insecurity, limited sports science services, insufficient exposure to competition and inadequate institutional support during transitions between educational and professional sporting careers continue to hamper athlete development. Hence, an all-round athlete-

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development system should include physical education, scientific training, sports nutrition, psychological counselling, injury prevention, sports medicine, digital performance monitoring and long-term career planning. Scholarships, educational flexibility, athlete insurance and post-retirement work options will further enhance athlete welfare and promote long-term engagement in competitive sports. For the realisation of equal athletic possibilities, gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive athlete-development programs are particularly vital.

Sporting Excellence and India's International Competitiveness

Sporting excellence is an indicator of a country's ability to generate internationally competitive athletes through sound policies, institutional arrangements, financial investment, scientific training and competitive exposure. India's international sporting performance has increased in a number of disciplines like athletics, badminton, boxing, wrestling, shooting, weightlifting, hockey and para-sports. Nevertheless, the importance of sustained performance across a wider spectrum of disciplines is a crucial developmental concern. Clarke and Mondal (2022) noted that India's international sporting successes have always fallen short of the promises of its people and sporting culture. This highlights the need to improve systemic circumstances impacting on elite sporting performance. According to the SPLISS framework created by De Bosscher et al. (2015), international competitiveness is said to be influenced by a number of policy elements such as financial investment, talent routes, coaching systems, training environments and competition chances. The National Sports Policy 2025 acknowledges the significance of international athletic excellence as a national goal and intends to enhance India's readiness for significant international events like the anticipated hosting of the 2036 Olympic Games (Government of India, 2025). In an effort to keep up the good work, the emphasis should shift from relying on the extraordinary accomplishments of individuals to a robust institutional framework that can generate competitive athletes in various disciplines. Priorities should include upgrading sports science facilities, strengthening coaching education, broadening exposure to international competition, developing sport-specific performance plans, and building reliable procedures for monitoring athlete advancement. Medal counts should therefore be supplemented by an assessment of worldwide achievement, depth of sporting skill, participation rates, institutional competence and athlete welfare.

Emerging Priorities for Transforming India's Sports Ecosystem

Viksit Bharat @2047 provides a significant long-term roadmap to transform the Indian sports ecosystem into an inclusive, professionally managed and internationally competitive system. Sports development may support this aim through better public health, youth empowerment, employment generation, social inclusion, economic diversification and international recognition. According to the Government of India (2025) sports have a vital role in youth development and national transformation. Likewise, the National Sports Policy 2025 identifies the inter-relatedness of sport-related economic possibilities, popular engagement, institutional development and international sporting excellence as priorities.

Table 2: Major Emerging Priorities in India

Developmental Dimension	Emerging Priorities towards 2047	Expected Outcomes

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Sports policy	Integrated national and state sports policies; evidence-based planning	Effective implementation and coordinated development
Institutional governance	Transparency, accountability, professional management and athlete representation	Efficient and ethical sports administration
Grassroots development	Expansion of school, college, university and community sports	Increased participation and wider talent identification
Sports infrastructure	District-level facilities, regional academies and accessible sports complexes	Equitable infrastructure access
Athlete development	Scientific training, nutrition, sports medicine and psychological support	Improved athlete performance and welfare
Sports education	Integration of sports with school and higher education	Strengthened sporting culture and career pathways
Technology and innovation	Artificial intelligence, performance analytics and digital talent monitoring	Improved training efficiency and athlete assessment
Gender and social inclusion	Targeted programmes for women, rural youth and persons with disabilities	Inclusive sporting opportunities
Sports economy	Professional leagues, sports tourism, entrepreneurship and private investment	Employment generation and economic development
International competitiveness	Elite training centres, global exposure and performance-based support	Sustainable improvement in international achievements
Monitoring and evaluation	Sports databases, impact assessments and outcome-based funding	Greater accountability and policy effectiveness

Source: Proposed policy framework based on Government of India (2025), Clarke and Mondal (2022), and De Bosscher et al. (2015).

The reform of India's sports ecosystem must bolster three interconnected elements – public engagement, institutional capability and elite sporting performance. Educational institutions, local governments, community organisations and public health programs should encourage mass engagement. Institutional capability should be enhanced by professional management of sports, sound financial management, upkeep

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of infrastructure and planned implementation of national and state policies. Elite sporting performance involves systematic talent identification, high-quality coaching, scientific training, worldwide exposure and long-term athlete welfare. Digital technologies and artificial intelligence provide prospects for performance assessment, talent identification, injury avoidance and improved institutional monitoring. Their usefulness will depend on technological capacity, quality and accessibility of data and suitable safeguards. Sports-related enterprises such as equipment manufacture, professional leagues, sports tourism, fitness services and sports technology can also help contribute to employment and entrepreneurship. Significantly, the development on 2047 must be measured through quantitative metrics such as participation rates, accessibility of facilities, availability of skilled coaches, retention of athletes, gender inclusiveness, fiscal efficiency and international athletic successes. An integrated, inclusive and evidence-based sports development strategy will enable India to build on its sporting culture while working toward the larger developmental goals of Viksit Bharat @2047.

Policy Recommendations

- Sports federations and administrative entities should follow transparent decision-making, professional administration, financial accountability, athlete representation and effective grievance-redressal systems. Institutional capacity building and frequent review must accompany implementation of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.
- More focus needs to be given to strengthening sports facilities in rural areas, small towns, schools, colleges and institutions. Infrastructure development should be on the lines of accessibility, upkeep and utilisation and not on construction alone.
- •Talent identification should be coupled with continual coaching, financial help, scientific training, health care, competitive exposure and career support methods. Special emphasis should be paid to athletes from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Sports should be incorporated more effectively into the education system at the school and university levels through structured physical education programs, inter-institutional contests, sports scholarships, and professional courses in sports management and sports science.
- Interventions should be targeted to combat gender inequities, geographical inequalities, disability related obstacles, and restricted possibilities among marginalised groups.
- •Sixth, stimulating technological innovation: Sports organisations must enhance performance analysis, digital athlete databases, scientific assessment, sports medicine and technology aided coaching.
- Resources allocation should be transparent and financing and partnerships based on outcomes should be promoted with business sector, educational institutions and community organisations.
- India's sports development blueprint should set measurable targets for 2030, 2036 and 2047 on grassroots participation, infrastructure development, athlete welfare, governance performance and international sporting competitiveness.

Conclusion

India's sports ecosystem is undergoing a major shift with policy reforms, institutional development, infrastructure growth, talent identification and a growing emphasis on international sporting prowess. Initiatives like *Khelo* India, TOPS, Fit India Movement, National Sports Policy 2025 and the National Sports Governance Act, 2025, are key attempts to develop a more integrated and accountable sporting structure. Nevertheless, the development of sport is still hampered by the persisting problems of infrastructure

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disparities, institutional coordination, financial limits, lack of scientific training, unequal participation and governance effectiveness. The study reveals that sustaining sporting brilliance does not depend on additional money or isolated international success. This requires boosting the entire pipeline of sport development from grass roots involvement and educational institutions through to professional coaching and elite international competition. Transparent governance, equitable distribution of resources, athlete-centric policy, technological innovation and evidence-based monitoring are critical to enhance institutional performance and international competitiveness. We need an inclusive, integrated and sustainable sports ecosystem that simultaneously promotes public health, youth empowerment, institutional accountability, economic possibilities and sporting excellence, to make India an internationally competitive sporting nation by 2047. This would not only elevate India's standing in international sports but also make a significant contribution to the larger national goal of *Viksit Bharat* @2047.

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