MINEPS V Conference 28-30 May 2013, Berlin

Report

Dear All,

                 SUB: MINEPS V Conference 28-30 May 2013..

As notified earlier and also announced during our meeting held on 14th January 2013 at Amravati (Mah) International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sports (MINEPS V) was held at Berlin (Germany) on 28-30 May 2013. About 125 nations were represented and 55 Ministers of sports and youth affairs of member countries attended the conference. India was represented by Ms. Neeta Chaudhary Secretary Youth Affairs, and Mr. Kedia Jt. Secretary Youth Affairs and Sports New Delhi. In addition, office-bearers of several International and national Organizations of physical education and sports were also invited. NAPES was represented by Dr.S.H.Deshpande General Secretary. Dr. B.R.Reddy Vice President NAPES was also invited, but he could not avail the opportunity due to technical reason. Dr. Deshpande attended the event for all the three days. The Conference venue was 'INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL' located at the mid of the city of Berlin. It was organized by UNESCO and hosted by the Government of Germany under the auspices of ICSSPE.  
  
**Programme**:     
  
Entire programme was based on three Key themes. They are:  
  
 1. Access to Sport as a Fundamental Right for All.   
      Inclusion in Sport - Implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities.  
      Participation of Women and Girls in and through all sports.  
  
 2. Promoting  Investment in Physical Education and Sport Programmes.  
      Promoting quality physical education.  
      Awarding of Sports Mega Events and their sustainability,  
  
 3.  Preserving the Integrity of Sport.  
       Commitment to the values of sport and the fight against match fixing, doping and corruption in Sport.  
  
Conference Sessions:

      On the first day i.e. 28th May, three independent sessions were held each dedicated to the theme specified. It was designated as "Expert Forum". There was an open discussion for the delegates to express their thoughts, ideas, concepts and experiences about the specific theme of the session. Access to Sport as a Fundamental Right for All was the theme of first session. Several delegates spoke about pros and cones as well as possibilities of considering 'Sport as a Fundamental Right' for the Citizens. While speaking on the theme, Dr. Deshpande pointed out that relying merely on modern competitive sports  would not serve the purpose, because of the fact that the elite sports are costly requiring artificial play surfaces, consumable equipment with recurring expenditure, possibilities of increasing unethical practices, highly technical skills involved, that have kept these sports away from common man. These sports are responsible in promoting passive spectator ship (TV viewers and stadium audience) in addition to commercialism, professionalism and careerism.The amateur spirit of sport is losing its flavor, howsoever may be the thrill, highly spectacular, exhilarating and adventurous nature of  these sports.  Only alternative for the common man is to involve in the practice of traditional physical exercises, sports and games, folk dances with a view to gain benefit of health, fitness and pastime. They are the activities of the soil, cheaper in terms of finance, value oriented, within the reach of every citizen. There is wide scope of promoting these low budget activities. Therefore, there should be worldwide consideration for promoting traditional sports and games along with modern elite sports.

This justification for traditional sports and games forwarded by Dr. Deshpande was appreciated and taken note of by the Forum.

The Second Session was dedicated to the second theme, i.e. Promoting investment in Physical Education and Sports. Public and private investment in creation of sports facilities, training programme of quality physical education in schools. Several delegates had expressed their concern about the low priority given to sport in their countries.  
Regarding quality physical education programme to be implemented in educational institutions, delegates of different countries voiced for creation of sports facilities, proper supply of consumable sports equipment, and quality of physical education teachers.Earmarking of proper budget and its implementation, was also raised by several delegates.  
  
The third session discussed the burning problems regarding unethical practices that have alarmingly gripped the field of sport. Match and spot fixing, betting, use of drugs and doping, corruption and such other malpractices are spreading like disease contaminating the field of sport. There is therefore, need to adopt stringent measures to root out these practices and  preserve the integrity of sport. Delegates of different countries spoke loudly about these practices and proposed measures like legislation, punishment, education of coaches, sports persons and medicos attending them.

Working papers of the three groups based on the recommendations and suggestions of the delegates were prepared for their presentation in the Conference of the Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for physical education and sports, that started on 29th May 2013.

**Conference Inauguration** (11.00 am - 01.00 pm)

29th May 2013:  The Chief Guest of Inauguration Ms. Irina Bokova UNESCO *Director General* d*e*livered inaugural speech by welcoming all and specifying role of UNESCO in organizing this World Conference - MINEPS V in collaboration with Federal Ministry of Interior Government of FRG. and with the support of ICSSPE.

This forum would provide a unique opportunity to explore the public policies that is  needed to develop sport and physical education at the global, national and regional levels. She expressed her confidence in the deliberations and fruitful output of the Conference. Followed by her, another opening speech was delivered by the host Ms Angela Merkel - Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.In her address she stressed the need for focusing global attention on sports for all and it should be the fundamental right of every citizen. Values like global understanding and peace are attributed to the sports. Hence,sports movement should be supported by all countries. She further reiterated significance of MINEPS forum and wished for successful result of the event.

General Introduction of the Conference was given by Hans-Peter Friedrich Federal MInister of the Interior Germany and welcome address by the Mayor of Berlin. Message of UN  Secretary General was read out, that was followed by Key-Note addresses by Sir Philip Craven, President International Paraolympic Committee, recorded key-note addresse of Sir Jacques Rogge President IOC was played; this was followed by the address byTimothy P. Shriver, CEO Special Olympics, and towards concluding of the session, Presentation of Themes and Draft Declaration was made by Arnaldo Rivero, President of the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS).

DAY 1. 29.05.2013

2:30 PM - 4:00 PM. Plenary Session - **Commission I**

                              Access to Sport as a Fundamental Right For All

With the opening ceremony onwards the session was meant for the Sports Ministers and the Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sports. Introductory lecture was delivered by Gudrun Doll-Tepper, Vice President of the German Olympic Sports Confederation. This was followed by open discussion on the theme of the Session. Sports Ministers and Senior Officials of different countries participated in debate/discussion. Based on suggestions, comments and recommendations received from the delegates, it was agreed upon to modify and finalise the draft. A sub-committee was formed to redraft the resolution.

4:30p.m. -6:00p.m. Plenary Session - Commission II

                          Promoting Investment in Sport and Physical Education Programmes

The second issue for Commission Iiwas regarding promoting investment in Sport and Physical Education Programmes. Introductory lecture was delivered by Jean-Loup Chappelet from Switzerland and then the topic was placed open for discussion. Various suggestions have come up from the delegates. Several ministers have explained how the investment is made by their national governments for the promotion of sport and physical education programmes in their respective countries. Legislation regarding compulsory physical education programme in schools, budget allocation for creating sports infrastructures, encouraging sports organizations to undertake mega events in their respective sport disciplines, public-private partnerships in maintenance of sports facilities, etc. were some of the measures proposed by the delegates.  Regarding investment in sport, it was commented by Mr. Kedia Jt.Secretary Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports New Delhi that the people or corporate bodies in India were not much keen to make investment in sports. Similarly, infrastructure sports facilities created for organizing mega sport event, after the event to put to reuse is a problem due to maintenance cost involved and proportionately not being used by the sports organizations for the training and regular practice of their sports persons.

Day 2. 30.05.2013

9:30a.m.-12:30p.m. Plenary Session - Commission III

                       Preserving the Integrity of Sport.

Introductory speech for the Session was delivered by Chris Eaton, Director, International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS). Soon after the speech the topic was kept open for debate/discussion. Several issues and problems pertaining to malpractices that have come to surface like betting, doping, match fixing, corruption,violence in competitive sports were raised and delegates expressed their concern for the same. The need to undertake stringent measures like legislation, punishment, education of the athletes, coaches and medical officers, establishment of anti-doping agency, media publicity, etc was expressed by many of the delegates. It was further appealed to adopt Copenhagen Declaration for Anti-Doping Activity -2005 signed by number of countries  by those that have not signed the Declaration.

2:30 - 4:30p.m.- Closing Ceremony

" For three days discussions covered important topics in sport: the examination of the case for more public investment, the combat against match fixing and doping in sport, as well as the reinforcement of the right to access sport for all people, across all regions. On the final day of the conference, all participants committed to the Declaration of Berlin.

In her closing statement, Margaret Talbot, ICSSPE President, called the multi-stakeholder engagement a “dream team” for future development. Assistant-Director-General for Social and Human Sciences at UNESCO, Pilar Alvarez-Laso, stressed the important role of civil society and that implementation and commitments will be furthered when the Declaration is presented at the upcoming UNESCO General Conference for further adoption. The Federal Minister of the Interior of Germany, Hans-Peter Friedrich, considered MINEPS V and the Declaration as “excellent communication platform and framework for multilateral initiatives and a good basis for promoting political decision-making and implementation at the national level.”  
Gudrun Doll-Tepper, current Vice-President of the German Olympic Sport Confederation, referred to the all-encompassing process as “important and exemplary” explaining that there had never been so much stakeholder involvement and commitment in this type of meeting before. The evolution of the Berlin Declaration was the result of a year and half of cross-sectoral preparation. Driven by the host nation, Germany, and UNESCO and coordinated by the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), over 90 researchers and practitioners were engaged through discussion forums to put forth a global position on each of the three conference themes. Committed to engaging governments and drawing stakeholders closer together many of the experts involved in the drafting process actively contributed to the conference discussions. Sylvia Schenk, sport advisor at Transparency International stressed that MINEPS V was the “best case for stakeholder involvement” and that she was impressed with the progress made - specifically referencing actions to preserve sport integrity - in a very short time and encouraged actors to remain patient, yet persistent as their work continues.

In the past, MINEPS conferences have been a closed dialogue for governments to develop and commit to international strategy in the field of sport science and physical education. As a progressive move, this year’s conference went beyond promoting collaboration in words but to engrain it through the meeting and planning process. Opening speeches by the presidents of the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee and Special Olympics emphasised the sport movement’s commitment to the conference outcomes and for the first time an Expert Forum was held prior to the plenary session to ensure that current research and best practices were heard governments and integrated into the drafting process of the Berlin Declaration" ( courtesy- ICSSPE website [www.icsspe.org](http://www.icsspe.org))

On the whole, the initiative of UNESCO in close collaboration with Ministry of Interior Federal Republic of Germany and under the auspices of International Council of Physical Education & Sports (ICSSPE) in organizing MINEPS V at Berlin proved successful in creating global awareness about physical education and sport. Hope, the National Governments will consider 'Berlin Declaration" while framing or ammending their National Sports Policies, keeping in view the place of Traditional physical cultures, sports and games. Hope, The CIGEPS will act a monitoring Agency for further development.

 Dr.S.H.Deshpande

General Secretary

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