**Olympic Disgrace**

What a shame on us 1.2 bilion people!! All because we have let politicians rule the roost in all sports related matters and institutions. Let us have a citizen‘s movement and charter –along with the current anti-corruption efforts- to clean up the mess.

Taken, half a dozen is more than the fingers of a palm and is something to brag about as a record, but standing low down at 55 in the list? 2bronze and 4silver are just loose change; where is the Gold that talent/competitions are all about? Hockey? At the bottom of the heap! Hopes were said to have been buried at team selection –read fixing- itself.

Cricket? At nadir after two overseas whitewashes, from the zenith of World Cup!! Glad it is not an Olympic sport; otherwise we would have had more to boast about.

It is possible to double the tally and aim for 20 (why not 50?) or more in the next Olympics; but not with the current set up, mis-governance and controls. Sports budget of 700+ Cr all mis-utilised and siphoned off by administrators that throttle development of sports is the curse we have lived with for too long. As for aspiring participants, their stamina, commitment and perseverance in overcoming bureaucratic hurdles and nexus of favouritism itself make them medal-worthies. Wasn’t Asian Games an eye opener, as to malfeasance? There is no point in exulting or Indian Olympic Association highlighting the achievements to retain powers.

Ask the youth; for, they are the future; its hopes, dreams and aspirations. Undoubtedly the response is to overhaul the system -sportspersons shouldering developmental responsibilities.

**What cure of the endemic malaise**? **Ban all politicians unless they have/had played the sport at high level**. **Let all sports persons take a vow this independence day that they will take charge and push out all politicians from all sports related funding and decision making bodies.**

True, sports reflects developed phase of nation states, like the economically forward ones such as USA, Britain, Korea and China too. Contrarily, Jamaica, Cuba and other less developed have also done well. Are we chokers at the last hurdles or happy to be part of a large contingent with freebies and fame for whatever little achieved? Don’t we have it in us to fight to the last and win too? Are complaints against bias, refreeing/umpiring and remonstrating against the system genuine or excuses to disguise our plight from reality?

The way the media covered the few winners, if in deed we had many, they would have had no time and space to eulogise. Gold from Sahara, land from State government, cash from Railways? For also rans? Such goodwill and funds are better used to alleviate poverty and improve health services. Let corporates take lead in promoting sports, as government has failed miserably.

We are not a young growing up country any more. After 65/62 years as independent/republic the underlying reasons for the shortcomings must be soul searched. Mourning and moaning about the missed and denied opportunities are unsportsmanlike to say the least.

On the economic front rhetoric and election preparations aside, what we need is focused developmental efforts since the President himself has expressed lack of faith in trickle down.

On the anti-corruption scene, taking the political path is perhaps inevitable as rules have to be made by the Parliament unless the Prez forces them through an Ordinance when the parliamentarians are chill-axing.

On the larger front there are lessons to be learned from other countries where President was impeached, Ministers voted out/forced to resign, Coup d’etat/putsch, violent/peaceful overthrows bringing in revolutions etc. Perhaps, we are more of a naïve and lazy peace loving nation so as not to opt for any of these, hoping and praying that we will somehow be served by those whom we elect and entrust.