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A game plan for India's success as 2036 Olympic host

(The Hindu, 31-08-24)

What is India's current position regarding hosting the 2036 Olympic Games?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced India's ambition to host the 2036 Olympics.
- India has never hosted the Olympics before. India's march towards its Olympic ambition began in 2010, after New Delhi hosted the Commonwealth Games.
- The country has historically underperformed in global athletics.
- The Indian sports engagement is at an all-time high.

What are the key benefits if India hosts the Olympics?

- **Infrastructure** Development with significant upgrades to sports facilities across the country and enhanced urban development in host cities
- Increased **tourism** before, during, and after the Games
- **Job creation** in construction, hospitality, and event management sectors
- Better **funding** and support for athletes and sports programs
- Elevated international **profile** for India
- Opportunity to **showcase Indian culture**, heritage, and achievements on a global stage
- Repurposing of Olympic venues for community use post-Games

What are the key challenges in India's bid to host the Olympics?

- Building consensus within and beyond India's borders.
- Developing world-class sports infrastructure across the country.
- Improving India's performance in international sporting events.
- Navigating the new IOC selection process through the Future Host Commission (FHC).
- Addressing environmental concerns and human rights standards as part of the bidding process.
- Coordinating efforts between the central government and states, as sports is a state subject.

What steps has India taken to improve its sports ecosystem?

- Reforming sports associations through the National Sports Development Code.
- Launching the Khelo India Scheme in 2017 to upgrade sports infrastructure and develop talent.
- Implementing the Khelo India Rising Talent Identification programme.
- Some states, like Tamil Nadu and Odisha, have invested heavily in sports infrastructure.
 - According to the Union Government, Tamil Nadu has nearly 390 Olympic-standard infrastructure facilities.
- Hosting international sporting events in various states to gain experience and showcase facilities.
 - Bhubaneswar, Odisha, hosted the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023.

What strategies are suggested for India's Olympic bid?

- Leveraging existing infrastructure in states like Tamil Nadu, Delhi, and Odisha for a cost-efficient bid.
- Forming a multi-stakeholder, representative committee to plan India's bid.
- Taking states into confidence and adopting a collaborative approach.
- Capitalizing on existing venues and facilities to reduce capital expenditure, similar to Paris 2024.

- Showcasing India's growing sports engagement and respect for its sportspersons.
- Ensuring leadership from the highest echelons of the Union government.
- Aligning the bid proposal with the criteria devised by the Future Host Commission.
- Highlighting India's potential to host a diverse and inclusive Olympic Games.

Can you answer the following question?

Critically Evaluate India's readiness to host the 2036 Olympic Games. Suggest a comprehensive strategy that India could adopt to strengthen its Olympic bid while ensuring long-term benefits for its sports ecosystem.

The human cost of factory explosions

(The Hindu, 31-08-24)

On August 21, a blast at Escientia Advanced Sciences, a pharmaceutical manufacturing unit in Anakapalli district of Andhra Pradesh, left 17 people dead and 36 injured. Since 2019, up to 119 industrial accidents have occurred in undivided Visakhapatnam district, of which Anakapalli is a part, leading to the deaths of 120 people

What are the ongoing concerns about industrial safety in the region?

- Workers and unions claim companies don't adhere to safety measures
- There are allegations of inadequate safety gear and training for workers
- Many workers are migrants from other states working for low wages. Such a temporary nature of employment for many workers, which may affect their willingness to raise safety concerns
- Absence of emergency rescue teams on-site during accidents
- Infrequent or inadequate safety audits
- Lack of transparency in implementing recommendations from post-accident investigation committees
- Concerns about the exemption of certain establishments from inspections (as per AP Government Orders)
- There are frequent calls by workers to the authorities to strengthen monitoring and implementation of safety regulations.

How has the frequent occurrence of industrial accidents affected the local community?

- Residents and workers live in constant fear of accidents
- Families of victims face emotional trauma and uncertain futures
- There's growing anger and frustration among workers, leading to protests thus disrupting the local economy.
- Some workers view working abroad as a safer alternative, thus pushing people to look for job opportunities elsewhere.
- The accidents have strained trust between the community and industrial management

What is the way forward?

Strengthening regulatory framework:

- Review and potentially revoke Government Order No. 62 that exempts certain establishments from inspections
- Establish an independent safety monitoring body to conduct regular, unannounced inspections

- Ensure transparency in post-accident investigations and implementation of recommendations
- Hold company management accountable for safety lapses through legal and financial penalties

Enhancing worker safety and rights:

- Mandate comprehensive safety training for all workers, especially new recruits
- Enforce the use of appropriate safety gear and equipment
- Improve working conditions and fair wages for migrant workers
- Establish protected channels for workers to report safety concerns without fear of retaliation

Fostering a culture of safety:

- Encourage companies to prioritize safety over production targets
- Promote awareness about industrial safety among workers and local communities
- Recognize and reward companies with exemplary safety records

Regular review and improvement:

- Conduct periodic reviews of safety measures and their effectiveness
- Stay updated with international best practices in industrial safety and implement them locally

Can you answer the following question?

Discuss the challenges in ensuring industrial safety in India's Special Economic Zones. What policy measures can be implemented to strike a balance between rapid industrialization and worker safety?

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