



Government of India
Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

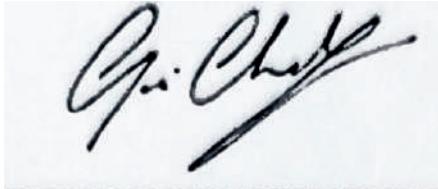
A UNIFIED FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT OF COACHING ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA

TASKFORCE REPORT

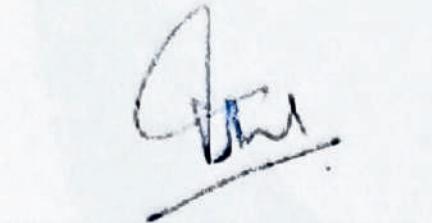
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Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports,
Government of India

December, 2025

COMPOSITION OF TASK FORCE



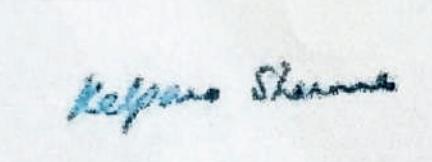
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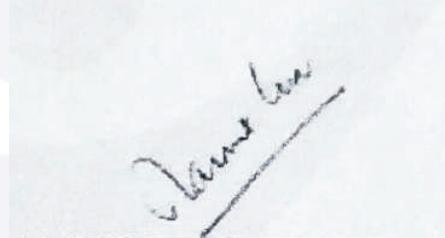
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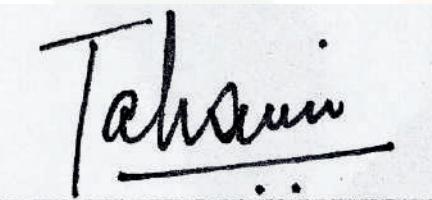
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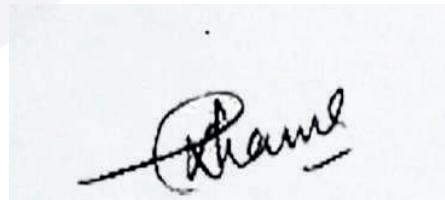
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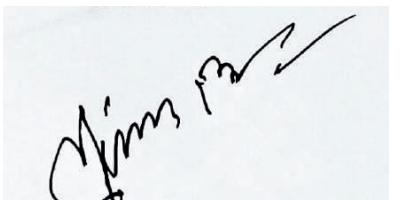
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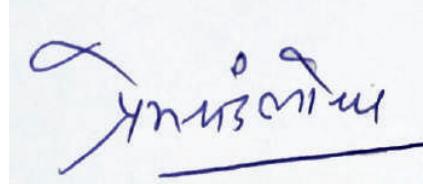
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FOREWORD

THE IMPERATIVE OF BUILDING INDIA'S OWN COACHING ECOSYSTEM

Choosing to develop a robust national coaching ecosystem is a difficult but essential decision—one that requires long-term commitment, systemic reform, and unwavering focus. For many years, India has relied on short-term, simpler pathways: sending athletes abroad for training or bringing in foreign coaches to temporarily fill gaps in expertise. While these approaches may offer immediate results, they do little to strengthen the country's foundational capabilities. They bypass the deeper challenge of building an ecosystem that understands India's cultural context, sporting history, infrastructure limitations, and athlete needs.

India's sporting ambitions have grown exponentially over the past decade, yet our Coach development systems have not kept pace with these national aspirations. The demands of modern high-performance sport, rapid technological change, and global benchmarking now require a comprehensive transformation of its purpose, processes, and governance model.

The absence of a strong indigenous system has created a situation where India lacks sufficient quality coaches at grassroots, intermediate, and elite levels. This gap has persisted because the harder choice—investing in our own systems—has often been postponed. Developing an Indian ecosystem that can cater to our specific needs, sustain long-term athlete pipelines, and produce world-class coaches is not only difficult but also time-consuming and resource-intensive. Yet, it is the only path that leads to sustained excellence.

A nation of India's size, ambition, and athletic potential cannot depend on borrowed solutions forever. If we aspire to become a consistent global sporting force, we must stop avoiding the complexity of the task. Instead, we must recognise that investing in local coach development is not optional—it is fundamental. Building our own knowledge, our own expertise, and our own systems is the only way to ensure continuity, self-reliance, and long-term growth. Strengthening the Indian coaching ecosystem is therefore not just a strategic requirement but a national responsibility.

This restructuring effort must begin with a clear acceptance of reality: our aspirations and our current institutional capabilities operate on completely different parameters. India seeks international excellence, but the systems designed decades ago cannot deliver the scale, quality, and speed required today. This gap is not a criticism—it is a recognition that India has entered a new era of sport, and we must create an ecosystem that is aligned with that future.

Coach development is a national development imperative. For this transformation to succeed, we must rebuild around three pillars: Autonomy, Accountability, and Empowered leadership. A self-evolving coach development ecosystem is required to fulfil national ambition.

Also, it is important to acknowledge the inherent complexity of this mandate. Every sport, every discipline within a sport, and every competitive event follows its own developmental trajectory. No single committee or task force can produce detailed blueprints for all of them. Instead, the role of this restructuring process is to lay down the national architecture for Coach development—a system of specialised verticals, accreditation pathways, faculty standards, research frameworks, and institutional autonomy—within which each sport can grow according to its unique needs.

The findings of the Coach Development Task Force reaffirm a sobering truth: India's work on structured coach development has barely begun. The ecosystem is fragmented, inconsistent, and heavily dependent on individual effort rather than institutional strength. A proliferation of courses, universities, international certifications, and private training programs—while well intentioned—has created confusion rather than clarity. To meet India's ambitions, the nation must rebuild its coaching framework from the ground up: defining pathways, classifying coaches, setting technical benchmarks, and establishing independent bodies for accreditation, evaluation, and faculty development.

This report lays out the foundational steps required to reboot India's coaching ecosystem. It proposes the creation of a National Coach Accreditation Board, standardisation of coaching curricula and faculty, the establishment of a national data registry of coaches, and a shift toward apprenticeship-driven, practice-oriented learning. It also emphasises the urgent need for independent structures with dedicated budgets and long-term autonomy—without which meaningful reform cannot take root.

The purpose of this document is not simply to recommend changes, but to articulate a direction. A direction where India builds a world-class coaching system.

This restructuring is not an option—it is an opportunity.

An opportunity to rebuild the very foundation of Indian sport.

The time to act is now.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The country and its sporting ambitions require a self-evolving coach development ecosystem. We need **a Unified and Practical Framework for Coach Education, Licensing & Athlete Development.**

This report aims to establish a comprehensive, implementation-ready national ecosystem designed to professionalise sports coaching in India and guarantee that every athlete receives stage-appropriate, science-based training. The framework is built on a practical, hands-on philosophy rather than academic theory, ensuring that coaches are real-world ready from Day 1.

In this journey we need to recognise that **Firstly**, coach development is specific to each sport. The complexity and nature of sport and its participants determine the number and skill of coaches required at each level. Hence, each sport needs to align its development pathways for the coaches.

Secondly, each sport needs to create a detailed plan towards nurturing its coach ecosystem. This is covered under sections "Objectives" and Curriculum Philosophy" later in the report.

3rd, To define "**Coaching Levels & Nomenclature**" – **Grassroot, Intermediate and Elite.**

There should be clear pathways and **stringent criteria** for coach's to be part of one of the levels of coaching. This need to be followed by **creating curriculum philosophy, Integrated Coach education philosophy and training approach.**

Further stringent entry criteria's and systems need to be developed to intake coach's across different levels. We need to create space for former athletes to come into coaching. Mentorship, research and newer training methods need to be included. Alignment with skilling need to be created.

4th, is to **Create Governance and Institutional Framework**. This framework needs to have **National Coach Accreditation board, National Sport Science helpline and Coach's registry and licensing board.**

5th Step, there is a need to define rules and incentives for athlete transfer from one coach to another with an intent to maximise potential. Coach's registry and licensing board will be very helpful in governing this. Each athlete is aligned to a coach and defined rules and incentives for transfer from one level to another happens.

Lastly, there is need to invest, incentivise and nurture the development framework. We need to create short term and long-term funding plan followed by monitoring and evaluation – at all levels and appropriate times to promote meritocracy and keeping development goals in sight. The way we have TOP scheme for athletes, we can create a parallel scheme for coach's.

VISION

To establish a unified, world-class coaching ecosystem in India that develops competent, ethical, and innovative coaches at all levels. This will ensure athletes receive stage-appropriate, science-backed training that maximises performance and well-being.

Guiding Principles:

- **Coach-led, athlete-centric, system-driven approach:** Coaching practices should empower coaches as leaders while keeping athlete development and welfare at the center of all programs.
- **Science-informed, context-specific, safe and inclusive practice:** Training methods will be guided by sports science and tailored to the Indian context, ensuring safety and inclusivity for participants of all backgrounds.
- **Evidence, ethics, and equity as non-negotiables:** Coaching decisions and policies must be evidence-based and uphold the highest standards of ethics and equity in opportunity. This report aims to establish a comprehensive, implementation-ready national ecosystem designed to professionalise sports coaching in India and guarantee that every athlete receives stage-appropriate, science-based training. The framework is built on a practical, hands-on philosophy rather than academic theory, ensuring that coaches are real-world ready from Day 1.

| TOTAL TRAINING TIME | PRACTICAL TRAINING | THEORETICAL LEARNING |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1800 HOURS | 1400 HOURS (~78%) | 400 HOURS (~22%) |

Practical Components (1400 Hours)

- Mentored internships in real-time coaching environments
- Live interaction with athletes and teams
- Applied sports science and on-field testing
- Supervised planning, implementation, observation and feedback cycles

Theoretical Components (400 Hours)

- Foundations in sport science and coaching pedagogy
- Psychology, physiology, safety, ethics and Safe Sport
- Planning, periodisation, and technology-driven performance analysis

This structure makes the framework **implementation-centric, outcome-oriented and field-validated**, rather than theoretical or certification-driven

OBJECTIVES

- **Standardise coach education and accreditation:** Establish nationally standardised pathways for the education, certification, and licensing of coaches across India, creating uniform benchmarks of quality.
- **Integrate sports science and technology:** Infuse sports science, data analytics, and technology into coaching at every level to enhance training effectiveness and athlete development.
- **Clear progression pathways:** Create a transparent pathway for coaches to progress from entry-level community coaching to coaching national teams, with defined criteria and support at each stage.
- **Recognise and reward coach contributions:** Implement systems to recognise, reward, and incentivise coaches for successful athlete development and performance progression, fostering a merit-based culture.
- **Ensure access and inclusion:** Expand the availability of safe, inclusive, and high-quality coaching nationwide, with special focus on underserved regions and groups (including women and persons with disabilities).



COACHING LEVELS & NOMENCLATURE

The report defines a tiered structure of coaching levels, each with a clear role definition, focus area, and competency profile. The 3-tier structure of coaches will be – Grassroot,

Other than them we have community coaches and physical education teachers who feed into this 3-tier structure. The role of all the coaches is strictly aligned to their KPI

Example is a **Community Coach** with a focus to spread Physical Literacy. Introduce basic motor skills, sports participation, and movement literacy at the grassroots (schools, clubs, community programs). Key Competencies: Fundamental movement instruction, ensuring safety and inclusivity, and motivating beginners.

Grassroot Coach: Focus: Identify young talent and deliver early technical training with age-appropriate development principles. Key Competencies: Effective communication and behavior management, guidance on early specialisation (when appropriate), and basic sports science knowledge for youth training.

Suggested sub levels within the Grassroots are as follows: –

Level 3 – entry from this level. everyone for at least 2 years at this level for experience

Level 2 – 2 years (National medalist can skip level 3)

Level 1 – 2 years (international medalist)

Intermediate Coach: Focus: Train athletes pursuing competitive pathways at state and national levels. Key Competencies: Advanced technical and tactical instruction, training periodisation, applied sports science (e.g. nutrition, strength & conditioning), and sports psychology for performance enhancement.

Suggested Sub levels are as follows: –

Level 2 – 2 years (Olympians can be taken from this level directly)

Level 1 – 2 years

Elite Coach: Focus: Work with elite athletes competing internationally or professionally. Key Competencies: Sport-specific expertise at the highest level, leadership and team management, high-performance analytics, and the ability to integrate multidisciplinary support (physios, psychologists, etc.).

Suggested sub levels are as follows: –

Level 2 – 4 years

Level 1 – 4 years

National Team Coach: Focus: Lead athletes representing India at world championships, Olympics, and other premier international events. Key Competencies: Strategic planning for competition, international competition management experience, athlete welfare and safeguarding at the elite level, and innovation in training methodologies.

Suggested sub levels for National Coach are as follows: -

Level 2 - 4 years

Level 1 - 4 years

Together, these levels align coaching roles across both participation-oriented coaching and performance-oriented coaching. This ensures that whether a coach is encouraging broad sports participation or training high-performance athletes, they possess the appropriate skills and certification for that domain. A multi-tier coach certification pathway (from short introductory courses to advanced diplomas) underpins these levels, with periodic re-certification to uphold standards. •

Some mandatory upgrade/update short course for upgrading between various levels should be made mandatory. There should be a conduct of regional and national level workshops. The courses may focus on relevant subjects across levels – Physical Literacy, ethics, value system in sports and safe sport

The license can be issued for 3 years vis a vis 4 years which could be either Asian games cycle or Olympic cycle. There need to be Leadership development focus across all levels and an Emphasis on ethics, fairness and spirit of sportsmanship to be part of every course or capsule – short, medium or long course

Coach Recruitment

All recruitment of coaches within government systems should be carried out directly by the government, ensuring transparency, standardisation, and alignment with national requirements. In addition, coaching positions funded through Khelo India, NCO, and National Camps must prioritise candidates who have been formally trained through NSNIS or through other accredited coaching pathways approved by the National Coach Accreditation Board (NCAB).

Similarly, degrees and diplomas awarded to sports scientists and other sport science professionals should be recognised as mandatory qualifications for relevant roles, thereby creating a unified and credible talent pipeline across coaching and support domains. By mandating that government recruitment, Khelo India programmes, and national camps giving first preference to graduates of these accredited pathways, the system guarantees two outcomes:

Candidates who complete these programmes receive strong placement opportunities, especially within government.

Coaches and support staff remain motivated to enroll in and complete these structured pathways, knowing that they lead to recognised and secure career opportunities.

This approach strengthens the integrity of the national coaching and sport science ecosystem while ensuring that only qualified, professionally trained individuals enter key roles in India's sporting framework.

CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The coach education curriculum under this report is designed to be practical, comprehensive, and aligned with long-term athlete development principles. It emphasises learning by doing, understanding the theory, and then refining through practice:

Practice–Theory–Practice Model: The training of coaches will follow a 3-stage iterative model:

Initial Practical Application – Coaches-in-training begin with hands-on experience, “learning by doing” in real or simulated coaching scenarios to ground their learning in practice.

Theoretical Instruction – Subsequently, formal instruction is provided on the scientific and theoretical foundations (“understanding the why”) behind effective coaching techniques, athlete physiology and psychology, pedagogical methods, etc.

Advanced Practical Reinforcement – Finally, coaches apply the learned theory in more advanced practical settings, refining techniques in real-world environments (such as supervised coaching of teams/athletes, internships, or coaching camps). This cycle may repeat at each certification level to progressively build competence.

Unified National Coach Curriculum: A unified curriculum framework will be mandatory across all certified coach education programs, with allowances for sport-specific adaptation. This means a common core structure and competency framework applies to coaches of all sports, ensuring consistency in fundamental coaching knowledge (ethics, sports science, pedagogical skills, etc.), while each sport federation can add discipline specific technical modules. The curriculum will integrate key components such as talent identification models, long-term athlete development (LTAD) stages, sports science applications, professional ethics, safeguarding practices, and inclusion strategies. A standardised curriculum across India’s sports ensures quality control and ease of cross sport recognition of coach qualifications.

Best-Practice Content Inclusions: In line with global standards and national needs, the curriculum will include modules on:



COACH EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY & INTEGRATED TRAINING APPROACH

Effective coach education is built on the philosophy of experiential learning and integration with the athlete development ecosystem. The key principles for delivering coach education under this report are:

Experiential Learning (“Learning by Doing”): The coach development programs will emphasise practical, on-field learning as the primary mode of instruction. Trainee coaches first engage directly in coaching exercises or real sessions to gain hands-on experience. This approach reflects the dictum of “learning by doing, followed by understanding, then doing with understanding,” ensuring that theoretical knowledge is always contextualised by practice. After action, coaches reflect on and discuss their experiences with mentors to derive lessons, thus internalising concepts more effectively.

Integrated Coach-Athlete Training: Coach training will be closely linked with athlete training environments. For example, national team training camps can serve as live learning labs for developing elite coaches, while junior and grassroots sports programs serve as training ground for community and developmental coaches. This integration ensures that coach education is never in isolation – coaches learn within the real context of athlete preparation, benefiting from observing and interacting with athletes and senior coaches in action.

Multimodal Delivery: Coach education will be delivered through a blend of modalities – on-field practicums, classroom (or virtual classroom) theory sessions, online learning modules, and on-ground internships/placements. Sports science concepts will be taught not just in lecture halls but practically – for instance, demonstrating biomechanics on the field, or periodisation planning during actual season calendars. Online platforms (including a proposed elearning portal under Khelo India’s e-Khel Pathshala initiative) will be leveraged for knowledge modules and sharing best practices nationally. This blended approach makes learning accessible and engaging.

Progressive Skill Development: The coach education pathway is structured in progressive levels, each building on the previous. Early stages focus on foundational knowledge (anatomy, basic pedagogy, introductory sports science), while higher levels delve into advanced sport-specific tactics, high-performance planning, and leadership skills. Coaches must demonstrate mastery at one level (and often gain field experience) before advancing to the next. This staged approach aligns with international coaching frameworks and ensures competence at every level before progression.

Mentorship and Community of Practice: A culture of mentorship will be fostered where experienced coaches (and certified coach developers) mentor new and developing coaches. Formal mentorship is part of the training approach, as is encouraging coaches to form communities of practice – regular discussion groups, peer learning workshops, and knowledge-sharing networks (both inperson locally and via online forums). This not only helps

individual coaches continue learning but also strengthens the collective capacity of India's coaching community.

Overall, the coach education philosophy is to produce coaches who are lifelong learners – adaptable, reflective, and always seeking to improve their craft. By embedding coaches in real sporting contexts during their education and emphasising practical learning, the report ensures coaches graduate ready to positively impact athlete performance and well-being from day one.

Balancing Art and Science of Coaching

Coaching is a profession that demands the highest levels of sincerity, discipline, and unwavering dedication. At its core, coaching requires an ability to read situations intuitively and make decisions that often push athletes beyond their comfort zones. True development in sport rarely happens in familiar, safe environments – it emerges from discomfort, challenge, and change. For this reason, coaches must consistently move players away from their accepted limits and guide them into new territories where improvement becomes possible. Some players may embrace this process, while others may resist or even dislike it. Yet, this tension is fundamental to building champions.

Because of the delicate balance between pushing an athlete and protecting them, the coach's intent and sincerity are paramount. Every improvement lies at the edge of discomfort, and at times, a coach may unintentionally push slightly beyond what is optimal. There is no perfect formula, and there has never been a coach whose methods are universally accepted by every athlete. What matters, therefore, is the overall direction – if the programme consistently produces progress, the system must trust the coach's judgment.

For athletes to truly benefit, they must believe in the coach's authority and surrender to the process even during their most uncomfortable moments. Trust is the foundation of high performance. If athletes feel they can bypass the coach by appealing to higher officials whenever training becomes difficult, the entire developmental process collapses. Systems that allow such escape routes unintentionally weaken discipline, performance culture, and the long-term growth of both individuals and groups.

This makes it essential that we build systems where the coach's authority is respected, protected, and clearly defined. Coaches must have complete freedom to implement their methodology, push athletes appropriately, and maintain high performance standards without fear of being undermined. At the same time, the system should ensure periodic valuation so that the coach remains accountable for athlete welfare, developmental outcomes, and overall performance trends. Striking this balance – firm authority with structured accountability – is the essence of a healthy, high-performance coaching ecosystem.

Career Pathway of Coaches

Career pathways play a critical role in an evolving and thriving ecosystem. After clearly defining grassroots, intermediate, and elite coaching progressions, coaches should have the opportunity to move between levels as they grow. A coach who excels at the grassroots or intermediate stage must not be restricted to that tier. The pathway should recognise potential, allow upward mobility, and encourage exploration of new responsibilities. This keeps coaches motivated and ensures that talent is utilised where it is most needed.

Contract structures should reflect the nature of each role. Grassroots coaches, who work with young children over extended developmental periods, require long-term, stable jobs. Intermediate-level coaches should have multi-year contracts — ideally around eight years — that align with athlete growth cycles. Elite coaches, however, must operate on performance-linked four-year contracts aligned with major competitive cycles, allowing their effectiveness to be reviewed and renewed periodically. These structures maintain stability while ensuring accountability at the highest levels.

For the system to be meaningful, the government must play a central role in recruitment and placement. All coaching recruitment within government organisations should be conducted directly by the government, ensuring transparency and alignment with national standards. Programmes funded through Khelo India, NCO, and national camps must give first preference to coaches trained through NSNIS or other accredited pathways defined by the National Coach Accreditation Board. The same principle must apply to sports scientists and related professionals — their degrees and diplomas should form the mandatory qualification basis for government placements. When the best graduates are given priority in jobs, it strengthens confidence in the system and motivates more candidates to take up these structured pathways.

Together, these elements — trust in the coach, authority balanced with accountability, clear career pathways, stable employment structures, and strong recruitment mechanisms — form the backbone of a robust and enduring coaching ecosystem. A system built on these principles not only elevates the quality of coaching across levels but also ensures that both athletes and coaches grow within an environment of integrity, discipline, and long-term vision.

Women in Coaching

Women coaches are an essential part of a balanced and modern coaching ecosystem. They bring unique strengths to athlete development, including higher levels of empathy, communication sensitivity, and a deeper understanding of issues related to safety, wellbeing, and gender-specific needs — qualities that are especially valuable when working with young athletes and women athletes.

To ensure their meaningful inclusion, the system must recognise that some women may face constraints related to travel, family responsibilities, or mobility. For such candidates, the pathway should offer relaxations in course structure, travel requirements, and timelines, without compromising standards. In addition, women coaches should be actively considered for roles such as coach developers, coach mentors, curriculum contributors, and coach evaluators, where expertise can be applied in a flexible or staggered manner. These supportive measures not only strengthen the overall coaching workforce but also create a more inclusive, safe, and holistic environment for athlete development.

GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK – NATIONAL COACH ACCREDITATION BOARD (NCAB)

To ensure that coach development in India is systematic, credible, and aligned with global standards, it is essential to establish a National Coach Accreditation Board (NCAB) – a parent body that houses the country's highest expertise in coaching, education, and sports governance. This Board will be the apex authority responsible for setting standards, approving pathways, accrediting institutions, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

The NCAB must be composed of individuals who bring depth, legitimacy, and cross sectoral influence:

1. An eminent academician with expertise in pedagogy and educational systems. This member will provide critical guidance on curriculum design, instructional methods, assessment standards, and alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP 2020).

Their role will ensure that:

- Degree programs, postgraduate pathways, diplomas, and modular certifications meet national academic standards.
- Qualifications map correctly to the NSQF, UGC requirements, and international norms.
- Coaching education integrates scientific, psychological, and pedagogical principles rather than relying solely on traditional sports knowledge.

2. A person of national eminence with cross-ministerial influence. This could be a respected public figure, former civil servant, or leader whose presence:

- Ensures that the report has weight and credibility across ministries such as Education, Skill Development, Youth Affairs, Women & Child Development, and Tribal Affairs.
- Helps secure funding, sponsorships, and institutional partnerships.
- Acts as the voice that champions the program nationally and internationally.

3. Secretary (Sports), Government of India. As a core member, the Secretary will:

- Anchor the initiative within the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS).
- Ensure that decisions translate into official government directives.
- Align Khelo India, SAI, and NSDF resources with coaching development.
- Facilitate approvals, notifications, and inter-agency coordination.

4. President, Indian Olympic Association (IOA). Their presence is vital to:

- Ensure alignment between federations, the Olympic movement, and national sports policy.
- Bring unity among national federations, who are critical stakeholders in defining coaching pathways.
- Ensure that Olympic, Asian, and Commonwealth sports are fully integrated into the accreditation system

5. Expert sub-committees (Sports Science Wing & Academic Wing)

- These teams—comprising specialists in sport science, biomechanics, psychology, strength and conditioning, curriculum design, and assessment will provide:

- i. Technical content for courses
- ii. Data-driven frameworks
- iii. Evaluation tools
- iv. International benchmarking

Role of Federations and Sport-Specific Pathways

Every sport in India has unique demands, developmental stages, and performance structures. Therefore:

- Each sport must define its own curriculum, competency framework, and technical progression model.
- The federation must determine its coach levels, star-rating system, assessments, and certification criteria.
- Teaching methods, training hours, practicum requirements, and evaluation tools must be customised for each sport.
- These sport-specific frameworks should be prepared within a six-month period, guided by the NCAB.
- Driving Principle: Meritocracy and Transparent Pathways

For India to build a strong coaching culture, pathways must be:

- Merit-based
- Transparent
- Progressive
- Performance-driven

This includes a star-rating system for coaches, structured continuous professional development (CPD), and regular re-accreditation to maintain quality.

Overall Vision

The National Coach Accreditation Board will become the central nervous system of India's coaching ecosystem—setting standards, ensuring accountability, and unifying government, federations, educational institutions, and the Olympic movement. By creating a structured, credible, sport-specific, and meritocratic system, India can build the coaching excellence needed to transform performance at every level. A robust governance and institutional framework will oversee the implementation of the coaching development and accreditation framework, ensuring consistency, accountability, and quality control across India. The NCAB will be the apex body for coach development, responsible for governance framework and curriculum oversight. Its key functions include:

Curriculum Design & Updates: Developing and periodically updating a unified coaching curriculum for all certification levels, in consultation with experts and aligning with international best practices.

Standards & Examinations: Setting entry standards for each coach certification level and conducting centralised examinations/assessments to ensure uniform competency nationwide.

Accreditation of Training Providers: Accrediting institutions and academies (including the National Institute of Sports and sports universities) to deliver coach education programs as per the NCAB's curriculum and guidelines.

Board Composition: The NCAB will comprise experts from sports science, elite coaching, coach education, and sports administration to provide balanced oversight and expertise.

Global Best Practices Integration: To strengthen the coaching ecosystem, the NCAB will incorporate the following features drawn from global good practices into its functioning:

Independent Safe Sport oversight: Implement independent Safe Sport and duty of care mechanisms linked to coach licensing, ensuring that safeguarding and athlete welfare are monitored and enforced.

Coach Developers' Network: Establish a national network of certified coach developers (tutors, mentors, assessors) who are trained to educate and mentor upcoming coaches, maintaining standardised quality in coach training.

Digital Coach Passport: Introduce a digital coach passport system to track each coach's qualifications, certifications, continuous professional development (CPD) credits, and background checks. This secure, privacy-by-design database will facilitate portability and verification of credentials across India.

Regional Centers of Coaching Excellence: Partner with states to set up Regional Centers of Coaching Excellence that serve as hubs for coach training, mentorship placements, and quality assurance in different zones of the country.

Transparency & Accountability: Publish an annual public Coaching System Report detailing progress (coach numbers, distribution, quality metrics) and appoint an Ombudsperson to handle grievances related to coach education and accreditation.

Coach Support System and National Grievance Cell

Across many professions, structured grievance mechanisms exist to protect the rights, wellbeing, and professional dignity of individuals. However, in sport, while athletes typically have access to counsellors, welfare officers, and grievance bodies, coaches often lack a dedicated support system despite being central to the performance ecosystem. Recognising this gap, the committee recommends the establishment of a Coach Support System / National Coach Grievance Cell under the National Coaching Board.

This body will consist of independent members with the mandate to assist coaches across the country by addressing concerns related not only to health, insurance, and financial issues, but also to professional rights, workplace challenges, administrative difficulties, and policy-related grievances. The purpose of this cell is to ensure that coaches—who play a critical role in shaping athletes and building sporting systems are not left to navigate difficulties alone. It will offer a structured, accessible platform for representation, guidance, problem resolution, and support, thereby strengthening the overall coaching environment and ensuring that coaches receive the respect, protection, and welfare mechanisms they rightfully deserve.

NATIONAL SPORTS SCIENCE HELPLINE

A National Sports Science Helpline will be instituted to provide on-demand expert guidance to coaches and athletes across the country:

Scope of Support: Real-time advice on athlete management, injury prevention and rehabilitation, nutritional guidance, training load optimisation, and performance analytics.

Expert Staffing: The helpline will be staffed 24/7 by a multidisciplinary team of sports scientists, physiotherapists, sports physicians, nutritionists, psychologists, and performance analysts, ensuring credible and sport-specific guidance. •

Accessibility: Coaches at any level will be able to access support via a toll-free phone line, a dedicated mobile app, and an online portal. This ensures even coaches in remote areas can consult experts and make informed decisions in training.

Integration with Coach Education: Data and frequently asked questions from the helpline will be fed back into coach education content, ensuring that common field issues inform curriculum updates and that coaches are trained to handle practical challenges using science-based solutions.



COACHES REGISTRY AND LICENSING BOARD

A national Coaches Registry and Licensing Board will maintain a centralised database and oversight of all accredited coaches in India:

Comprehensive Coach Database: The registry will record each coach's profile – including certification level attained, training history, CPD credits earned, star-rating status (see Section 5), and notable athletes or teams coached. This facilitates tracking the growth and distribution of the coaching workforce.

Licensing and Renewal: Coaches will be issued a license (or accreditation card) upon certification, valid for a period of three years. Renewal of licenses will be contingent on the coach fulfilling Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements and maintaining good standing (including adherence to ethical guidelines and satisfactory coaching assessments). A quality review of coaching practice (including feedback from athletes) will be part of the renewal process to ensure coaches remain effective and up-to date.

Quality Assurance: The Licensing Board, working with NCAB, will conduct periodic audits of coaching practice, randomly sample coach performance (through observations or athlete feedback), and can recommend remedial training or suspension of license if 19 standards are not met. This ensures accountability and continuous improvement in the coaching profession.



REGISTRATION

ENTRY POINTS & SPORT-SPECIFIC GOVERNANCE

Streamlined Entry and Advancement: Entry points into the coaching pathway will be clearly defined and promoted, attracting talented individuals (including former athletes and PE teachers) into coaching. In collaboration with each National Sports Federation (NSF), specific entry criteria for sport-specific coaching courses will be determined by expert groups comprising senior coaches, former elite athletes, and heads of leading sports institutes (like LNIPE, LNCPE, NSNIS). This collaborative approach ensures the selection of coach trainees is tailored to the needs of each sport while maintaining national standards.

Educational and Skill Entry Pathways: Individuals may enter the coaching pathway through various routes

Physical Education (PE) Teachers: Existing PE teachers will be encouraged and enabled to obtain NCDAP certification. Bridge programs and flexible course schedules will allow PE teachers to upskill without disrupting their school duties, and these certifications can count toward their mandatory Continuous Professional Development credits in the education system (synergising with NEP 2020's teacher development focus).

Sports Graduates: Students graduating from sports universities or institutes (e.g., National Sports University Imphal, LNIPE Gwalior) can have portions of the NCDAP curriculum integrated into their degree programs. Upon graduation, they would hold both an academic qualification and a corresponding coach certification/license making them job-ready as coaches.

Former Athletes: A Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system will formally acknowledge high-level competitive experience as credit towards coach certification. For example, retired athletes who have represented India or achieved honors in their sport can fast-track into advanced certification courses. Bridge courses (short intensive modules) will be provided to such athletes focusing on pedagogy, sports science basics, and athlete management skills to complement their experiential knowledge. This fast-tracks quality certification for those likely to become excellent coaches due to their experience.

Recognition of Prior Learning & Bridge Courses: The RPL framework will include a national RPL portal with standardised assessment rubrics to evaluate the prior experience of athletes/coaches who lack formal certification. Candidates assessed through RPL may earn credit toward certain modules of a course or gain direct entry into an appropriate certification level. Bridge courses (as noted) will fill any knowledge or skill gaps, particularly in teaching methodology and sports sciences, to ensure all certified coaches meet the competency standards.

Administration Enhancements:

To facilitate sport-specific governance within a unified system:

National Federation Agreements: Each NSF will sign onto the national coaching framework via Memoranda of Understanding, committing to aligning their sport-specific coach education with the NCDAP structure. They will contribute to curriculum development for technical modules and possibly host sport-specific components of courses. In return, coaches certified under NCDAP will be recognised for in all NSF programs.

Cross-Sport Credit Recognition: There will be mechanisms to recognise and transfer credits for common competencies across sports. For instance, a Strength & Conditioning or sports nutrition module completed under one sport's coach training can be credited if a coach moves to another sport domain. This flexibility encourages coaches to diversify skills and supports sports that share similar foundational training needs.

NSQF Alignment: All coach certification levels will be mapped to the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) to formalise their recognition as skill qualifications. This mapping facilitates equivalence with other educational/vocational qualifications, enabling coaches to receive government skill development benefits and employers to understand the competency level. It also allows integration of coach certifications into the National Skill Qualification ecosystem (e.g., allowing coaches to earn skill credits in the Academic Bank of Credits, as outlined in NEP 2020).

Digital Integration: Coaching credentials will be integrated into national digital repositories such as DigiLocker for verification and portability. A shared national dashboard will track certified coaches, their active status, CPD participation, and even athlete outcomes, aiding both policymakers and employers in monitoring and planning.

By clearly defining entry routes and working closely with NSFs and educational institutions, the report ensures a steady pipeline of qualified coaches. It harmonises sport-specific nuances with a national standard, and by embracing RPL and NSQF alignment, it opens coaching as a viable professional career pathway embedded within India's broader education and skill development framework.

COACH SUPPORT THROUGH THE TOP SCHEME MODEL

To further incentivise excellence and ensure our most promising coaches have the resources to succeed, the report adapts the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) model – which has successfully supported athletes – for coaches' development:

Elite Coach Identification: Each NSF, in conjunction with SAI and the NCAB, will periodically identify a select number of high-potential coaches (for instance, five per sport annually) who are instrumental in preparing athletes for major competitions or driving grassroots expansion in medal-potential sports. These coaches could be in any category (performance, high performance, or even developmental coaches producing outstanding talent) based on defined criteria like athlete results, innovative practices, and professional growth.

Grant Proposals: Identified coaches will be invited to submit professional development proposals, analogous to athletes' training proposals under TOPS. A coach's proposal may include requests for:

Advanced equipment or technology to enhance training (e.g., video analysis tools, biomechanical feedback systems).

Specialised training for themselves (such as an international certification course or an internship with a renowned foreign coach/team).

Support staff or services for their coaching unit (e.g., part-time access to a sports psychologist or physiotherapist for their trainee group).

Organising high-performance athlete camps or talent scouting programs in their region, if the coach is focused on grassroots.

Funding Support: Once approved, each coach's plan will be funded through a dedicated "Coach TOPS" fund. This grant funding empowers coaches to elevate the performance of a defined group of athletes under their guidance. For example, a wrestling coach preparing junior national medalists might get funds for a biomechanical analysis camp and a short overseas exposure visit; a grassroots coach in football might get funds to run a talent scouting league in a rural cluster. Funds are released with milestones and oversight similar to athlete TOPS funding.

Focus on Grassroots and Elite Alike: Importantly, this model supports:

Nascent Sports and Grassroots: Coaches working in sports that are medal prospects in the long term but currently underdeveloped, especially in rural or tribal areas, will receive support to build infrastructure and training programs (e.g., a swimming coach in a tribal belt identifying young talent could get resources to set up training camps).

Elite Performance Enhancement: Coaches already training elite athletes (national teams, etc.) can use funds to bring cutting-edge methods to their programs, addressing specific performance gaps aimed at podium success.

Accountability and Outcomes: Coaches under this scheme will have their progress monitored. They must report on how funds were used and the outcomes (athlete improvements, systems put in place). This not only ensures accountability but also helps gather best practices that can be shared with other coaches. Consistent with TOPS philosophy, the funding is flexible to the coach's plan but tied to clear performance or development goals.

Adopting the TOPS model for coaches acknowledges that behind every top athlete is a coach who also needs investment. By mirroring a proven athlete-support mechanism, India will nurture a cadre of coaches capable of producing world-class talent, thus completing the virtuous cycle of sports excellence.



ROLES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

The recommendations recognise that sports coaching and physical education often intersect, especially at the grassroots level. It delineates clear roles for Physical Education (PE) teachers (who often act as community-level coaches in schools) and for specialised sports coaches, along with criteria to evaluate their performance in fostering sporting talent and participation. This ensures accountability and clarity in expectations across the board:

Physical Education Teachers & Community Coaches

Role & Responsibilities

PE teachers and community coaches form the base of the sporting pyramid. Their primary role is to broaden the base – getting as many children and youth engaged in physical activity and basic sports as possible. Key expectations include:

- **Improve General Fitness and Participation:** Work to raise the average fitness levels of students or community members, instil the habit of regular exercise, and spark general interest in sports and games. A successful PE program under a teacher/community coach will see most students participating enthusiastically and improving in basic fitness metrics over time.
- **Inclusivity and Universal Access:** Ensure that sports programs are inclusive. The measure of success is not just the stars of the class, but that even the least skilled or least interested individuals are drawn in and have a positive experience. Coaches must pay special attention to girls, socio-economically disadvantaged children, and those with disabilities, adapting activities so everyone can take part meaningfully.
- **Promote Life Skills and Values:** Use sports as a vehicle for character-building. PE teachers and community coaches should emphasise teamwork, respect, discipline, perseverance, and sportsmanship in their sessions. The aim is that even if participants do not go on to sports careers, they carry forward positive values and healthy lifestyle habits learned on the playground.
- **Pathway Referral:** While not focusing on high performance themselves, community coaches are a vital link in identifying talent. They should collaborate with higher-level coaches and local sports bodies to refer and channel promising athletes to development programs (a “identify and pass upward” approach). This means keeping an eye out for children who excel or show potential and guiding them (and their parents) towards advanced coaching opportunities.

Evaluation Criteria

To assess the effectiveness of PE teachers and community coaches, a multi-faceted evaluation will be used:

- **Fitness & Participation Metrics:** Improvement in average fitness scores of their student group (e.g., results of simple fitness tests over the year) and the percentage of students regularly participating in sports activities. A rise in these numbers indicates success in engaging students.
- **Inclusivity Measures:** Evidence of inclusive practices, such as balanced participation rates between boys and girls, inclusion of children with disabilities (with adapted PE activities), and feedback from usually disengaged students indicating a positive experience. Specifically, feedback surveys will target the “last person in the class” – those least inclined to sports – to gauge if their attitudes have improved due to the coach’s efforts.
- **Qualitative Feedback:** Periodic 360-degree feedback involving student surveys, peer (teacher) feedback, and possibly parent feedback. Positive feedback, especially from those who historically might have been left out, will be a strong indicator of a coach’s impact on school/community sport culture.

PE teachers who become certified under NCDAP and demonstrate strong results may be given additional responsibilities or opportunities (such as leading cluster-level sports initiatives under Samagra Shiksha or Khelo India programs) as a way to reward and leverage their success.

Sports Coaches (Grassroot, Intermediate and Elite)

Role & Responsibilities

Coaches in specialised roles at the Grassroot (developmental), Intermediate (performance) and Elite (high-performance) levels have a more athlete-competitive pathway-centric mission:

- **Talent Development and Progression:** Their foremost task is to identify talented athletes and systematically develop them, with the objective of “passing them upward” to higher levels of training/competition when ready. For a grassroot coach, this might mean preparing a state-level athlete to move to a national academy; for a high-performance coach, it could mean grooming an athlete for international podiums.
- **Optimise Training Environments:** Ensure that training programs are scientifically designed and individualised. This involves planning training cycles (periodisation), focusing on skill and tactical development, and monitoring athletes’ physical and mental well-being to avoid burnout or injury. Coaches must create a quality daily training environment that includes goal-setting, regular evaluation, and adjustments based on progress.

- **Incorporate Sports Science and Innovation:** At higher levels, coaches should actively integrate sports science support (nutrition plans, strength & conditioning, sports psychology) into athletes' routines. They are expected to stay updated with the latest techniques and innovations in their sport, whether it's a new analytical tool or a contemporary coaching methodology, and apply those that could benefit their athletes' performance.
- **Mentorship and Professionalism:** Senior coaches (high-performance level) are also leaders of coaching teams. They should mentor junior coaches (assistant or trainee coaches), share knowledge, and uphold a culture of professionalism and ethical conduct within their training centres.

Evaluation Weightages & Reviews

The evaluation of sports coaches will be more outcome and process driven, combining quantitative athlete results with qualitative assessments:

Balanced Scorecard Approach

A weighted scorecard will be used to capture different dimensions of a coach's performance:

- **Athlete Progression & Performance (40%):** How effectively has the coach's cohort improved or advanced? This can include metrics like athletes' performance improvements, number of athletes transitioning to higher levels (state to national, etc.), or medals and rankings achieved by their athletes.
- **Training Environment & Program Quality (30%):** Continuous via periodic audits and expert observations. Are training sessions well-structured, safe, and conducive to learning? Are sports science and recovery protocols being implemented? This may involve external evaluators scoring practice sessions or reviewing training plans.
- **Continuous Development & Mentoring (20%):** Coaches are expected to continually upgrade themselves (CPD courses completed, workshops attended) and also mentor others. Points are awarded for completing CPD hours, serving as a mentor or speaker, and contributions to coach education.
- **Administrative & Compliance (10%):** These covers maintaining required documentation (training logs, athlete data), adherence to administrative requirements (like timely athlete entries for competitions), and compliance with all regulations (e.g., Safe Sport guidelines, anti-doping awareness sessions for athletes).

360° Review Mechanism

A holistic review process will supplement the scorecard. This involves:

- **Athlete Feedback:** Athletes (and where appropriate, parents of minor athletes) will periodically provide confidential feedback on the coach's effectiveness, communication, and supportiveness.

- **Peer and Senior Coach Observations:** Fellow coaches or senior mentors (including Coach Developers) will observe sessions or review the coach's program and provide evaluations.
- **Self-Assessment and Reflection:** Coaches will be encouraged to maintain a reflective journal or annual self-assessment against key competencies, which will be considered during evaluations to see the coach's own awareness and growth.

The outcome of the evaluation will not only be used for appraisal but also to identify professional development needs. For instance, if a coach scores low on "integration of sports science," they may be assigned to attend a workshop or work under a mentor in 26 that area. Exceptional coaches identified through evaluations can be fast-tracked for higher roles, awards, and international exposure opportunities.

Mental Health & Psychological Safety: Training coaches to foster athletes' mental well-being, recognise signs of mental distress, and create an environment of psychological safety and trust.

Safe Return-to-Play & Environmental Safety: Educating coaches on injury management protocols, safe return-to-play decisions, managing training loads, and ensuring athlete safety in varied environments (e.g., extreme heat, humidity).

Anti-Doping & Ethics: Fundamental knowledge for coaches on anti-doping rules, ethical coaching practices, and promoting clean sport among athletes.

Technology & Data Use: Guidance on the ethical use of performance technology (video analysis, wearables, AI tools) and protecting athletes' data privacy in the age of digital coaching tools.

Safeguarding Children & Inclusive Coaching: Mandatory training on child protection, gender sensitivity, and coaching athletes with disabilities. Coaches working with minors must complete child safety certification, and those working with para-athletes must undergo disability inclusion training. These specialised modules ensure all coaches are equipped to provide safe and inclusive coaching for vulnerable groups, and will be a prerequisite for obtaining or renewing licenses to work in those contexts. All curricular elements will be reviewed and updated periodically by the NCAB in collaboration with academic experts and veteran coaches, incorporating feedback from the field. This dynamic curriculum approach keeps coach education responsive to new scientific insights and evolving sporting needs.



COACH PROGRESSION & ATHLETE TRANSFER INCENTIVES

There is a need to recognise that **coaching excellence does not emerge from theory alone**. It must evolve through **guided practice, measurable outcomes, and a meritbased development pathway** that values contribution, competence, and continuous learning across all levels. By embedding coaches directly in real training environments and prioritising hands-on development, India will cultivate a workforce capable of producing world-class athletes consistently and sustainably.

Coach Pathways, Competencies & Merit-Based Progression

The coaching pathway can be structured across **four progressive levels—Grassroots, Intermediate, Elite, and National-Team**—with **Level 0 as the entry stage for all**, enabling multiple entry points including PE teachers, former athletes, and sports-science graduates. Entry level has to be **stringent**. Progression to be based on measurable performance indicators, including:

- **Athlete development and transitions to higher competitive levels**
- **Continuous professional development (CPD)**
- **Mentorship of emerging coaches**
- **Innovation, research, and publication contributions**

Each sport will have its own competency benchmarks and assessment booklet, reflecting discipline-specific technical and experiential demands.

A **hybrid delivery model** is recommended: leveraging existing institutional capacity (e.g., NIS centres, sports universities) while building a distributed national mentorship network through **senior coach-mentors supervising internships and practicum-based learning experiences**.

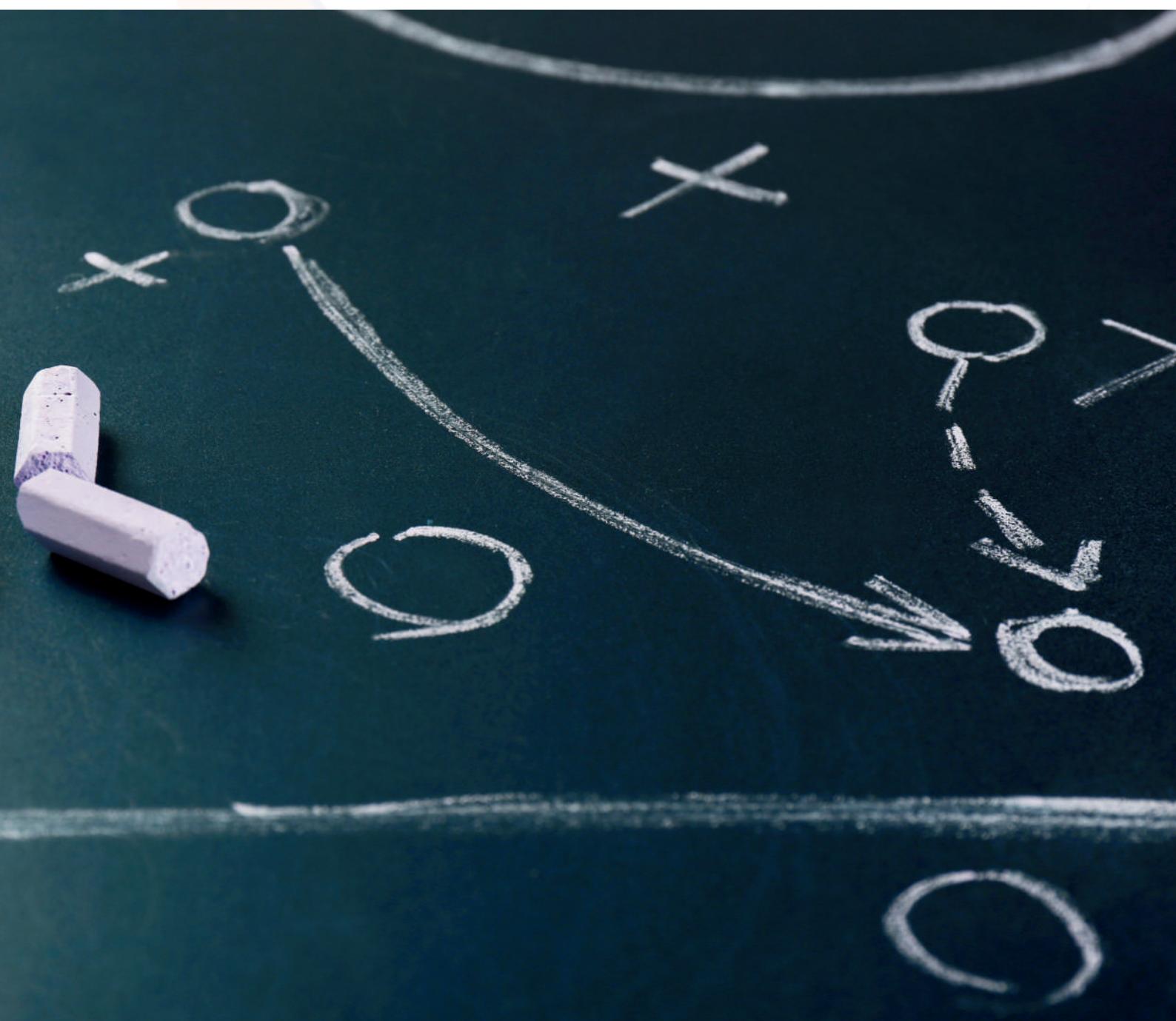
Elite (High-Performing) Coach Development: Coaches who excel in developing athletes and attaining high star- ratings will be provided opportunities for further growth. The top-performing coaches in the system may be identified for advanced international certifications or exchange programs to broaden their exposure. Such initiatives, possibly funded through central schemes or the National Sports Development Fund, ensure that India's best coaches continue to learn global best practices and bring that knowledge back into the national coaching ecosystem.

To encourage coaches to develop athletes to their highest potential – even if it means “handing them over” to the next level coach – the recommendations introduces a progression and incentive system for both coaches and athletes:

Athlete Progression Reward: When an athlete coached by a grassroots or developmental coach progresses to a higher-level coaching group (e.g., from state to national camp), the former coach will receive formal recognition and reward. This may include progression points in their coach profile, financial bonuses, or awards. Such rewards acknowledge the foundational work of the previous coach in the athlete's development and encourage coaches to foster long-term athlete growth beyond their own level.

Star-Rating System: Each coach certification level will have an associated five-star rating system. Coaches earn stars through a combination of achievements and contributions, such as completing advanced certifications, producing athletes who achieve significant results, accumulating CPD hours, mentoring junior coaches, or undertaking innovation projects in coaching. Higher star ratings will unlock access to advanced courses, special funding or equipment grants, and eligibility for elite coaching appointments or roles. This creates a merit -based incentive for coaches to continue improving and contributing to the system.

Progression Safeguards: To ensure athletes experience smooth transitions as they progress: Transparent Transfer Protocols: Clear guidelines will outline how an athlete is transitioned to a new coach at the next level, including proper documentation of athlete development plans and philosophy and addresses any initial challenges proactively.



FUNDING & INCENTIVES

Effective implementation of the National Coaching Development and Accreditation Framework will require coordinated funding strategies and incentive structures. The approach will blend government support with innovative funding mechanisms:

Multi-Source Funding: Both Central and State governments will co-fund the rollout and operation of coach education programs. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) will provide central funding support, while state sports departments are encouraged to allocate matching funds or resources to address local needs. This cooperative funding ensures nationwide coverage while allowing state-specific tailoring.

Grant Programs for Coaches: Dedicated grants and fellowship programs will be instituted for coaches pursuing professional development or contributing to innovation:

Research and Innovation Grants: Coaches (or groups of coaches) who undertake sports science research, pilot innovative coaching methods, or develop new training tools can apply for grants to support these projects. This encourages a culture of inquiry and keeps coaching methods evolving.

International Exposure Scholarships: High-performing coaches or coach developers may receive scholarships or sponsorships to attend international workshops, certification courses, or exchange programs, bringing back knowledge to India.

Grassroots Coaching Fellowships: Incentives in the form of honorariums or fellowships for certified coaches who commit to working in rural or underserved areas, to ensure quality coaching reaches every corner of the country.

Outcome-Based Funding: Funding allocation will increasingly tie to outcomes and compliance with quality standards:

ACTC Linked Funding

The funding for Coach's development needs to be part of ACTC budgets and is equally critical as athlete development – across all levels.

Consider yearly ranking of federations based on their coach development index and ensure that 20% of their ACTC budgets are spent on Coach development and in some cases even more

Khelo India and NCOE's

Coach development should definitely include Khelo India centres and also NCOE centres and any other centres which receive funding from government in various ways. We need to incorporate ways in which we can make them all part of producing coaches along with players as part of their KRAS (Key Result Areas)

- **Pathway Progression Grants:** Training centres or state programs may receive bonus grants if a certain percentage of their coached athletes progress to the next level (district to state, state to national). This aligns financial incentives with the core objective of athlete development.
- **Safe Sport Compliance:** Institutions that maintain exemplary standards in Safe Sport (e.g., having trained Welfare/Safeguarding officers, zero tolerance to abuse, etc.) can be given priority in funding or additional grants. This encourages embedding ethics and safety into program DNA.

Incentives for Continuous Learning:

To promote lifelong learning among coaches:

CPD Scholarships: Coaches from underserved regions, women coaches, and coaches training athletes with special needs will be eligible for scholarships or stipends to pursue advanced certifications or CPD courses. This ensures inclusivity and encourages diverse participation in higher-level training.

Recognition & Awards: Annual National Coaching Awards will include categories recognising coaches who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to professional development, innovation, or produced significant athlete outcomes. Awards may carry cash prizes or special privileges (such as mentorship opportunities with elite coaches).

Public-Private Partnerships and CSR: The report encourages leveraging corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds and private partnerships to supplement government funding. For example, companies could sponsor coaching academies, high-performance coach training programs, or provide equipment and technology support. State governments are also encouraged to integrate this report implementation with existing state schemes and seek CSR grants to finance local coaching initiatives.

All funding mechanisms will be administered with transparency and periodic audits. Financial support, when tied to clear development outcomes and coupled with incentives for excellence, is expected to accelerate the professionalisation of coaching in India.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

A rigorous Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework will track the implementation of the coaching development framework and its impact on the coaching ecosystem and athlete outcomes. Key metrics and processes include:

Key Performance Metrics: The NCAB and Ministry will collect data on critical indicators, such as:

Quantity and Qualification of Coaches: Number of licensed coaches at each level and their regional distribution across the country. This helps identify gaps in coach availability and deployment.

Athlete Progression Rates: Tracking how athletes move through levels (grassroots to elite) under certified coaches, indicating the effectiveness of coaching at each stage.

Continuous Professional Development: Rates of CPD course completion among coaches and their engagement in mentoring or coach-developer roles.

Diversity and Inclusion: The diversity of the coaching workforce, including gender parity and representation of different communities, as well as the inclusion of coaches for para-sports.

Athlete/Parent Satisfaction: Periodic surveys of athlete and parent satisfaction with coaching quality, to give voice to the beneficiaries of coaching.

Expanded KPIs: In addition to the core metrics, specific KPIs will address priority focus areas:

Para-Sport Progression: Monitoring participation of athletes with disabilities and their progression, reflecting how well coaches are equipped to train para-athletes.

Retention: Measuring drop-off rates at key transition stages of athlete development (e.g., from junior to senior level) to assess if coaching interventions are improving retention of talent.

Injury Rates: Tracking injury incidence and time-loss due to injury among athletes, as an indirect measure of training load management and coaching quality. •

Training Environment Quality: Utilising independent observers or audits to score the quality of coaching environments (safety, equipment, athlete engagement, etc.). This might involve unannounced inspections or evaluations using a standardised rubric.

Evaluation Processes:

Annual Coaching Audit: An annual report will compile all M&E data, highlighting achievements, trends, and areas needing improvement. This "Coaching Report Card" will be presented to the Ministry and made public to ensure transparency and accountability.

Feedback Loops: The system will include formal feedback mechanisms where coaches receive reports on their performance (from the registry data, athlete feedback, etc.). Additionally, coaches and athletes can provide feedback upward to NCAB about curriculum, assessments, and systemic issues.

Continuous Improvement: Based on M&E findings, the NCAB will recommend improvements such as targeted workshops (if, say, injury rates are high in a sport, a workshop on injury prevention will be mandated), changes in curriculum, or policy adjustments. The Ombudsperson (mentioned in Governance) will also feed into M&E by highlighting grievance patterns that may indicate systemic issues. Through these measures, the report ensures that simply certifying coaches is not the end goal ongoing quality of coaching is monitored and enhanced, creating a culture of accountability and excellence.

Continuous Assessment and Continuity

Not only NSFs, all Govt recognised and/or aided academies must abide by NCAB rules and engage only accredited coaches. Private academies shall also be encouraged to join the initiative.

Also to ensure continuity of thought process, direction and decision making, In all the committees / decision making groups – 50% member may continue and other 50% may retire / move on and be replaced when tenure is completed. Similar cycle needs to be followed every time when committee / group tenure is over.

The independence and autonomy of the Coach Accreditation Board, along with the other specialised boards referenced in this framework, is essential for the long-term success of the national coach development program. These bodies must function without undue influence, ensuring that decisions related to curriculum, assessment, certification, and progression are driven by expertise, integrity, and professional standards rather than external pressures.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that no framework can succeed without meaningful support and participation from both the Government and the National Sports Federations. Sustainable coach development requires stable structures that bring together continuity, collaboration, and shared ownership among all stakeholders. Therefore, it is crucial to design governance mechanisms that ensure involvement from multiple segments of the ecosystem, while preserving the functional autonomy of the accreditation boards.

Each sport-specific vertical within the broader coaching development system should include three essential roles in its curriculum and implementation processes:

- A Sports Science Expert,
- An Academic with expertise in training and education, and
- An Expert Coach with deep practical knowledge of that discipline.

Together, this triad will be responsible for defining the entry requirements for coaching courses, designing curriculum components, establishing evaluation protocols, and guiding implementation methods. Their combined perspectives ensure that the system remains scientifically robust, educationally sound, and practically relevant for the realworld demands of high-performance sport.

This structured, collaborative, and expert-led approach forms the foundation for a credible and resilient national coaching ecosystem.

Closing Note – Creating a Citizen Led Movement

India's diversity, population scale, and socio-economic realities make it one of the most complex nations in the world in which to build a uniform talent and coaching development ecosystem. Because of this, India cannot simply replicate foreign models; it must design its own pathway, shaped by its culture, aspirations, and social structure. This demands innovative thinking, strong decentralisation, and visionary leadership that understands India's unique social fabric.

In large nations with vast and varied populations, creating systems that reach every district, town, and community is extremely challenging. The only way to achieve such depth is to leverage people-driven ecosystems, not institution-driven ones. India's greatest successes have always emerged from the energy and determination of its middle class, not from elite institutions alone.

This is best demonstrated by the “road to excellence” phenomenon visible in fields such as engineering, medicine, and civil services:

- The road to IIT is often more transformative than IIT itself.

Lakhs of students, driven by aspiration, family support, competitive coaching centres, and peer motivation, created a nationwide movement that lifted academic standards across the country.

- The road to Medicine (NEET) mobilised families, created strong community networks, and pushed institutions to improve—driven again by the aspirations of the middle class.
- The road to IAS is another iconic example. Civil services preparation is a national ecosystem of ambition, coaching hubs, peer groups, family sacrifices, and community reinforcement—far larger and more powerful than the training institutions alone.

In all these cases, it is competition, aspiration, and family-driven motivation that built excellence—not institutional capacity.

Sport in India can benefit from the same logic. At the grassroots, parents, families, teachers, and local volunteers are the first and often the only support system for young athletes. They are emotionally invested, they are present every day, and they are willing to sacrifice time, money, and energy. Ignoring this powerful group has been one of India's biggest missed opportunities.

To build a coaching ecosystem that reaches 10,000 towns and inspires millions, India must empower these emotionally connected stakeholders—families, volunteers, exathletes, school teachers, fitness enthusiasts—by giving them structured pathways into coaching. This does not replace professional coaches; instead, it widens the base, creates scale, and builds a culture where sport becomes a family-supported aspiration, just like IIT, Medicine, and IAS.

Yes, this model has its own limitations. But at a national scale, especially when aiming for rapid progress in the next decade, a people-led, aspiration-driven, competition-based model is not only realistic—it is necessary. With the right offline training pathways, blended certification programs, and structured support systems, we can bring millions into the coaching pipeline.

This approach mirrors India's strongest success stories: Aspiration multiplied by family support, structured pathways, and community-level ecosystems.

That is how India can build a coaching revolution—not by copying other countries, but by unlocking its own social strengths at scale. To sum up, India's journey toward building a world-class coaching ecosystem must be rooted in its own strengths: community ambition, family support, and people-driven action. If we can align structured training with the passion and resilience already present across towns and villages, and it can vary for different sports in different parts of the country, India will not just produce great athletes—it will create a self-sustaining culture of excellence. The next decade is our window. If we act boldly, trust our own social energy, and build scale from the ground up, India can emerge as one of the world's most dynamic sporting nations.

ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE I COACH DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY DIAGRAM

This annexure provides a diagrammatic representation of the coach development pathway and the star rating progression system described in the report.



The diagram illustrates how a coach can progress vertically through the levels (Community → Developmental → Performance → High-Performance → National Team Coach), and how within each level, the five-star rating system incentivises further growth. The star indicators in the diagram correspond to milestones such as additional certifications, successful athlete graduations to higher levels, contributions to mentorship, etc.

Key Highlights of the Coach Development Cycle (as depicted in the diagram):

- Coaches enter at various levels based on qualifications and experience (with lateral entry possible via RPL for former athletes or PE teachers, as indicated by arrows feeding into the pathway).
- A coach's development is cyclical and lifelong – even after reaching a level, they continue to learn (CPD) and can earn star credits, which in turn may open up special advancement opportunities or elite assignments.
- The transition of an athlete from one coach to another (between levels) is shown as a handover point, emphasising the report focus on smooth athlete transfer with shared credit to the previous coach.
- The diagram underscores how the entire coaching ecosystem is interconnected: community coaches form the broad base, feeding into higher levels, and the top level coaches rely on the base for a pipeline of talent. This reinforces the "One Nation, One Coaching Framework" concept that the report embodies.

(The actual diagram should be referred to for a visual understanding. It is intended to be a quick reference for stakeholders to grasp the structure of coach development and progression at a glance.)



ANNEXURE II

INTEGRATION WITH EDUCATION AND SKILLING ECOSYSTEM

One of the cornerstones of this report is ensuring that sports coaching development is integrated with India's broader educational and skill development initiatives, rather than functioning in isolation. This annexure outlines the Task Force recommendations for embedding the National Coaching Development and Accreditation Framework (NCDAF) within existing national frameworks like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the Skill India mission. The aim is to leverage educational institutions, schools, and skill development schemes to support and sustain coach development, backed by convergent funding and administrative coordination.

1. Education System Alignment

Sports and physical education are critical to holistic schooling, as emphasised by NEP 2020's focus on sports-integrated learning. To capitalise on this:

- **School Sports & PE Integration:** Deploy certified Community Coaches in schools through the "school complex" model (clusters of schools sharing resources). These coaches will work alongside PE teachers to deliver sports training and talent spotting across schools in a locality. This approach aligns with NEP 2020's recommendation to integrate sports into the curriculum, helping students adopt fitness as a lifelong attitude. Schools adopting this model can improve sports participation and identify talented students for higher coaching early on.
- **Pathways for PE Teachers:** Create opportunities and incentives for existing Physical Education teachers to get certified under NCDAP. Their NCDAP training will count towards their mandatory professional development (as required by school education boards). This not only upgrades their skills but also ensures a uniform coaching standard in schools. Over time, a PE teacher could progress to also being a certified Developmental Coach, bridging school sports and competitive sports seamlessly.
- **Higher Education Linkages:** Integrate NCDAP curricula into universities and colleges offering sports science, physical education, and coaching degrees. For instance, sports universities (like LNIPE Gwalior, NSU Manipur) and physical education departments can embed the Level I, II, III coach certification content within their degree programs. Students graduating would then automatically earn a coach certification/license in addition to their degree. Formal collaborations 38 (Moues) between NCAB/SAI and universities will be established to facilitate this integration, ensuring academic credit is granted for coach certification courses and vice versa.

2. Skill Development & NSQF Mapping

Coaching is also a professional skill and is being recognised within India's skill qualification framework:

- **Sector Skill Council Integration:** The Sports, Physical Education, Fitness & Leisure Sector Skill Council (SPEFL-SC) under NSDC will formally include the coaching pathway in its scope. This means developing specific National Occupational Standards for various coach levels, and having them as part of the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF). Each NCDAP coaching level (Community, Developmental, etc.) will be mapped to an NSQF level for nationwide recognition.
- **Multiple Entry-Exit Options:** Embracing the flexibility promoted by NEP 2020 and Skill India, the coaching certification system will allow multiple entry and exit points. For example, a candidate with a Bachelor's in Physical Education might directly enter at a Level II (Trainee Coach) course. Conversely, someone might exit after a Level I certification to gain experience and later re-enter at Level II. The framework will be aligned such that these certifications can be accumulated in the Academic Bank of Credits, allowing coaches to "bank" their learning and return later to upgrade (this leverages NEP's credit transfer reforms).
- **Vocational Sports Coaching in Schools:** Introduce sports coaching as a vocational subject at the secondary school level (Classes 9–12) under the Skill India programs. Students opting for this will undergo a curriculum that could grant them a Community Coach certification by the time they finish school. This will be delivered via skill development initiatives (possibly using digital platforms like DIKSHA for theory). Such a program not only creates an early pipeline of young coaches but also gives students an employable skill upon graduation.

3. Funding & Implementation through Existing Schemes

To implement this framework at scale, it will dovetail with existing government schemes for education, sports, and skill development, leveraging their funding:

- **Samagra Shiksha (Education Ministry):** Utilise Samagra Shiksha funds to strengthen sports facilities in schools and remunerate community coaches. Budgets from this integrated school education scheme can cover sports equipment, the hiring of shared Community Coaches for school clusters, and organising teacher training (CPD) in sports. This ensures schools have financial support to participate in the NCDAP rollout.
- **Khelo India (Sports Ministry):** Leverage the Khelo India program to support coach development initiatives. Khelo India already emphasises community coaching development and the creation of sports academies. Under this report, Khelo India funds will be directed to establish coach training centres, run "coach the coaches" master-trainer programs, and upgrade infrastructure at regional coaching hubs. The convergence means that when a state sets up a Khelo India Centre, it also becomes a venue for NCDAP courses; scholarships for coach trainees may be given similarly to athlete scholarships.

- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY – Skill Development Ministry):** Make NCDAP entry-level courses (especially Level I – Community Coach) available under PMKVY skill training programs. This would allow aspiring coaches, particularly unemployed youth or school dropouts in the 18–30 age group, to enrol in coach training free of cost or at subsidised rates. PMKVY already provides skill training in sports sector job roles (e.g., community sports coach, fitness trainer), and this will be expanded to include the standardised NCDAP curriculum. Additionally, PMKVY Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) camps can be held to certify experienced coaches who lack formal credentials, thereby rapidly expanding the certified coach base.
- **UGC & RUSA (Higher Education):** Secure support from University Grants Commission and Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan for higher education institutions implementing integrated coaching programs. For example, grants could fund the creation of “Centres of Excellence in Sports Coaching” in universities or research grants for faculty involved in developing coaching science.
- **National Sports Development Fund (NSDF):** Tap the NSDF for specialised initiatives like high-performance workshops, international coach conferences in India, or sending promising coaches abroad for short-term training. NSDF can also co-fund infrastructure upgrades needed at coach education institutes (such as sports science labs, e-learning facilities).
- **CSR and State Schemes:** Encourage state governments to align their sports schemes with this framework and allocate funds for local coach development (e.g., 40 state sports talent schemes could include a coach training component). Simultaneously, approach corporations and PSUs under CSR to sponsor coach development programs in communities, particularly in aspirational districts or for specific sports. Corporate-funded “grassroots coach scholarships” or equipment donations can be funnelled through the framework to where they are needed most.

By weaving together these schemes, the financial burden on any single entity is reduced, and existing funds are utilised efficiently for a common goal. Every rupee spent under these schemes for sports or education will amplify the impact by feeding into a nationally coordinated coach development effort.

4. Policy Harmonisation & Operational Convergence To oversee and manage this multi-sector collaboration, mechanisms for convergence will be established:

- **Inter-Ministerial Task Force:** A high-level task force comprising officials from the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) will be constituted. This body will meet regularly to plan, monitor, and troubleshoot the implementation of NCDAP across ministries. It ensures that, for example, when curriculum changes are needed, both education and skill departments adjust their programs in sync, or when funding is to be reallocated, it is done in consultation.

- **Unified Digital Credentials and Credit Bank:** As noted, coaching certifications will be integrated into the National Academic Bank of Credits and stored in DigiLocker for authenticity. This means a coach who completes a course gets credits that could count towards a diploma/degree, and their certificate is digitally verifiable by employers (schools, SAI, sports academies). It breaks down the silos between vocational training and formal education – a coach certification is treated as a skill credit and an academic credit.
- **Shared Monitoring Dashboard:** A central online dashboard will be created to track key statistics: number of coaches trained (by level, state), courses conducted, CPD programs availed, athletes impacted, etc. All stakeholders (ministries, SAI, state sports bodies, education departments) will have access to relevant data. This transparency aids coordination and allows quick identification of gaps – for instance, if a certain state lags in coach certification, the dashboard flags it and the Task Force can intervene with additional support.
- **Pilot Programs and Phased Rollout:** Before full national implementation, pilot projects integrating these recommendations will run in select states or regions. For example, one state could pilot the school-complex Community Coach deployment with 41 Samagra Shiksha funds, while another pilots the PMKVY-funded Level I coach courses. The outcomes and lessons from pilots will inform refinements in the approach. Phased scaling will ensure that by the time of nationwide adoption, the model is proven and practical challenges have been ironed out. Funding convergence from different sources will also be tested in these pilots to develop standard operating procedures.

OUTCOME

This integrated approach ensures that coach development becomes a core part of India's education and skill-building mission, rather than a standalone sports initiative. Embedding the coaching framework in schools and colleges will raise sports participation and talent nurturing at the grassroots. Recognising coaching in the skill sector will open livelihood opportunities and professionalise the domain. With sustainable funding streams and aligned policies, India will develop a nationally recognised, well-trained coaching workforce that strengthens school sports, fuels community programs, and ultimately drives more athletes into elite pathways. This convergence of education, sports, and skill development efforts will create a self-reinforcing system where good coaches produce better athletes, and those athletes' success, in turn, fuels further interest and investment in coaching at all levels – completing a virtuous cycle of sporting excellence.



सत्यमेव जयते

Government of India
Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports