Chapter 7

Preparation for a New Era
(1963-1973)
CHAPTER VII

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In last two chapters the researcher intended to highlight the account of development of physical education for 15 years in each chapter - 1932-1947 and 1947-1962 respectively. In this chapter the researcher will consider the development of physical education for ten years (1963-1973). This is because 1963 and 1974 are two significant years in the development of physical education in West Bengal. Therefore, the researcher intended to present the historical perspective from 1963 in a new chapter and that of 1974 and onwards would be taken up in the next chapter.

After analysing critically the information collected from several sources it is found that during this period efforts were taken by the Central Government and agencies of West Benal State Govt. i.e. West Bengal State Council of Sports, Director of Public Instruction, Ministry of Sports, and non Govt. organisation West Bengal Physical Education Association. These efforts are summarised below chronologically as far as practical.

7.1 EFFORTS OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
7.1.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT-1963

During the period (1963-1973), the most notable development in the sphere of physical education in West Bengal was the establishment of Department of Physical Education at the University of Kalyani at Kalyani in 1963 (22). In the same year, two more universities, Panjab University, Chandigar and Benaras Hindu University, Uttar Pradesh along with Kalyani University were the first in the country to establish the Department of
Physical Education under the auspices of University Grants Commission, New Delhi. The purpose was to focus the emergence of physical education as an academic discipline at university level (3). To have an overview of the situation and the perspective for opening the Department of Physical Education as an academic discipline at the Kalyani University, the researcher tempted to put forward few lines from an article of Prof. S.R.Duttagupta of the Department of Economics and former Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Kalyani, published in the Silver Jubilee Commemorative volume of the Department of Physical Education, University of Kalyani (2). "...................... It was a small beginning, and a belated beginning at that. Even so, the year 1963, the year of acceptance of Physical Education as a curricular course of studies at University level, will be remembered as an important land mark symbolizing the retreat of an unholy alliance of forces - the strange triad of obstinate apathy, inexplicable prejudice and entrenched opposition of powers-that-be that so long denied the just right of Physical Education to be accepted as a scientific academic discipline at University level in the country. It was a triumph of sheer elemental courage demonstrated by the robust-minded and farsighted first Vice-Chancellor and the amazing and convincing work ground tirelessly and silently done by that stalwart Professor H.Gargory, the illustrious first Head of the Department and Director of the Institute of Physical Education, and his inspired small band of first generation teachers".

Initially the course, offered by the department, was a Diploma in Physical Education. Students, admitted in the first batch (1963 - 1964) were 19 males (1). The course was opened for the female student in the year 1966. Later the nomenclature of the course was changed to Bachelor of Education in Physical Education from 1969-1970. In West Bengal between 1932 and 1962, the Post Graduate Training College for Physical Education, Banipur was the only teachers training college and the demand of trained teachers, at least for schools, had not been fulfilled from one training institute. The Department of Physical Education, Kalyani University did a splendid job in producing qualified teachers of physical
education. This department was not only confined to conventional teachers training programme but also made significant impression in the academic pursuit. In 1967, Department of Physical Education first published its journal 'Prachesta'. Of the three functions of the university department i.e. teaching, research and service, the Department of Physical Education fulfilled its objectives and preparation in this direction was initiated during the later half of 1960's. The department extended its helping hand to people around in keeping health and remaining fit.

7.1.2 REPORT OF THE DESHMUKH COMMITTEE (1965-1967)

With a view to examine the present facilities of physical education and the standards and quality of games and sports in Indian universities and colleges and for making recommendations for removing inadequacies and rising current levels, the University Grants Commission appointed this committee, in December, 1965 under the chairmanship of Dr. C.D. Deshmukh (23). The committee submitted its report in February, 1967. The report, interalia, recommended that -

(1) The development of physical education in the universities and colleges should be given the highest possible priority and regarded as an essential and integral part of education and human development.

(2) Certain norms should be developed to ensure optimum utilization of the available resources. It is necessary that each college should aim at having about 8 to 10 acres of land for playground.

(3) Suitable incentives should be provided to students and teachers to participate in games, sports and other forms of physical education and to create in them a sustained interest in these activities.

(4) In the degree awarded to a candidate there should be a mention of his record in games and sports apart from marks or division / class in the regular subjects.
(5) More students should be encouraged to participate in national and international events in the field of games and sports.

(6) Young lecturers in the universities and colleges should be encouraged to take a more active part in games and sports and in other extra curricular activities. These teachers might also be given some relief in their teaching load.

(7) The University Grants Commission should appoint a review committee to carry out a comprehensive review of the courses offered by the colleges / departments of physical education, to evaluate the standard of training and to make suggestions for the improvement and upgrading of standards.

7.1.3 KOTHARI COMMISSION (1964-1966)

The Kothari Commission (Education Commission), 1964-1966 which was considered as blue print of educational development in modern India, considered physical education as an important aspect in education system. They gave due weightage to physical education and highlighted some important aspects of physical education including school curriculum for physical education in their report (18). Some of the important recommendations of the committee were as follows :-

Article 8.88 of the report: There has been a tendency in recent Government schemes of physical education to emphasise on the only physical fitness value of physical education and ignore its educational value. It must be emphasised that such education contributes not only to physical fitness but also to physical efficiency, mental alertness and the development of certain qualities like perseverance, team spirit, leadership, obedience to rules, moderation in victory and balance in defeat. A satisfactory programme of physical education can be developed only on the basis of the following principles:
1. The physical education programme should be planned for desirable outcomes keeping in mind the interests and capacity of the participants.

2. The traditional forms of play and physical activities that have developed in our country should receive due emphasis in the programme.

3. The activities promoted should develop in each child a sense of personal worth and pride.

4. A sense of sharing responsibility in a spirit of democratic co-operation should grow from experience on play ground and also in the gymnasium.

5. The programme offered should supplement other programmes of education and not duplicate them.

6. The programme should be within our financial means.

7. The programme should reach all rather than a selected few.

8. Special instruction and coaching should be provided for students with talent and special aptitude.

Article 8.89 of the report: Physical education should include developmental exercises, rhythmic exercises, sports and games, outing activities and group handling activities. All these have simple and advanced forms. The simpler form of activities should be introduced in the early classes, the more advanced ones should be gradually provided as boys and girls become more and more mature.

7.1.4 NATIONAL FITNESS CORPS (1965)

In 1965, on the basis of the recommendations of Kunzru Committee, National Fitness Corps was developed by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India (15). Ultimately National Discipline Scheme was abolished and its
place was taken by National Fitness Corps programme. The programme aims at making the youth physically strong and resilient for the defence of the country by developing physical efficiency, toughness, courage, endurance, discipline and patriotic favour. For proper implementation of the National Fitness Corps programme in secondary schools, rules were recommended by the Union Ministry of Education, Govt. of India. This scheme was controlled by the N.F.C. Directorate, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India through their regional offices (4).

This integrated N.F.C. programme of physical education was adopted by the State Government in 1965 (17). After the implementation of N.F.C. programme in 1965 all National Discipline Scheme instructors employed under this scheme in West Bengal has been posted to different secondary schools. And after closing the N.F.C. Directorate, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India and their regional offices since 1972, the State Govt. took initiative to run the N.F.C. programme. Accordingly in West Bengal, National Fitness Corps Section of the Education Directorate was newly opened in 1973 (9). But the Govt. of India, Ministry of Education & Social Welfare has decided to finally disband the National Fitness Corps (12) and accordingly served a three months notice with effect from 1.8.76 on all the National Discipline Scheme instructors, posted in different schools in West Bengal, for termination of their services with the Govt. of India. Finally, Govt. of West Bengal for the purpose of absorption of the existing N.D.S. instructors sanctioned the creation of a separate cadre (11) “West Bengal State Physical Education Teachers’ Cadre” with 338 posts in three different scales in 1976. In this order, it was clearly indicated that the said cadre shall be a diminishing cadre and posts sanctioned, hereby, shall stand abolish with effect from dates on which they fall vacant.

7.1.5 NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION (1968)

The National Policy on Education announced by the Govt. of India in 1968, stated that (16) - “Games and Sports should be developed on a
large scale with the object of improving the physical fitness and sportsmanship of the average student as well as those who excel in this department. Where playing field and other facilities for developing a nationwide programme of physical education do not exist they should be provided on a priority basis”.

7.2 EFFORTS OF THE AGENCIES OF GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL

7.2.1 WEST BENGAL STATE COUNCIL OF SPORTS

In 1966, West Bengal State Council of Sports published a report on survey of sports facilities and the state of affairs of sports and games and physical education (26). They highlighted lack of facilities including playground, un-interested Govt. machinery, lack of trained physical education teacher, lack of dedicated professional personnel and moreover lack of proper attitude etc. as responsible factors for the poor development of physical education and sports infrastructure in West Bengal.

7.2.2 DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Conference of District Level Inspecting Officers of the Education Department was held on 25th - 27th May, 1970 (21) at Institute of Education for Women, Hestings House, Alipore. In this conference, several committees were formed to discuss regarding several aspects of education. Among these committees, Physical Education Committee recommended a few points for the development and expansion of physical education in educational institutions in primary level as well as in secondary level. Some of the recommendations are furnished below:

Primary Level

1. Adequate playing space measuring not less than 1/2 bigha should be provided in each primary schools.

2. Physical education should be the responsibility of all the teachers of a school.
3. Lecturer in physical education is essential and must be appointed in each of the Junior Basic Training Institute so that each and every teacher going out of the institution may have adequate theoretical and practical knowledge to teach the subject.

Secondary Level

1. Physical education must be a curricular teaching subject for all types of secondary schools and 4 periods per class per week must be provided in the time-table for health education and physical education.

2. Provision for appointment of assistant teachers trained in physical education must be made in all secondary schools and these teachers should be treated at par with other teachers. This is necessary for efficient teaching of the subject.

3. Facilities for physical education must be provided to carry out the programme.

4. A standing committee for physical education should be appointed by the Board of Secondary Education to draw up programme, syllabus for physical education and also to devise ways and means for its implementation.

During August, 1971, the Education Directorate took a positive initiative regarding development of sports and physical education for women. The Director of Public Instruction distinctly made some programmes (5-A) for women with Inspector of Physical Education & Youth Welfare (Women), West Bengal at its pivotal position. A lady Inspector of Physical Education was assigned to supervise and guide physical educational and welfare work in Govt. and Govt. aided institutions for women in the state. The lady Inspector was also authorised to create an environment congenial for the women regarding sports and physical education. She was supposed to advise Govt. regarding construction of gymnasium, swimming pool, development of playground etc. She was
also entrusted to organise seminars, refresher courses for physical instructresses and all related supervisory work for the welfare of the girls and women.

7.2.3 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (SPORTS BRANCH)

APPOINTMENT OF BLOCK PHYSICAL EDUCATION ORGANISER

In 1970, West Bengal Govt. took an initiative for the appointment of 50 Block Physical Education Organisers in 50 selected development blocks for intensive development of physical education and sports in rural areas (5). Accordingly Governor sanctioned 50 posts of Physical Education Organisers in the scale of 300-10-420-15-600 in 1972 (6). The Physical Education Organisers were under the administrative control of the District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare. Organisers were appointed in different districts in 1972-1973. To popularise the scheme, Govt. again sanctioned another 50 posts of Physical Education Organiser in same scales and same vacancies in the all districts in 1975 (10). But there is no evidence that later posts were filled up. The duties and functions of these Physical Education Organisers were as indicated (7) below -

1. The Physical Education Organiser is to ensure participation of the people in all sporting activities in his area. He will organise different games and sport activities in the block.

2. He will take steps to encourage local youth to participate in different games and sports.

3. He will take steps to encourage local youth to form clubs and associations for sporting activities in the blocks.

4. He will arrange and conduct local competitions, coaching, demonstration etc. in different sports activities.

5. He will visit clubs and associations, educational institutions in the blocks in the discharge of his functions and also see to the proper functioning of the Block Sports Association.
6. He will enquire into the applications for grant-in-aid for the improvement of playgrounds, acquisition of equipments and reference books on games and sports made by the clubs in his area.

7. He will work in consultation with the B.D.O. for implementing all schemes for improvement in rural games and sports.

A letter from District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare, Midnapore to the Deputy Director of Public Instruction (Physical Education) in 1974 (8) clearly indicated Block Physical Education Organisers were functioning satisfactorily. However, careful consideration of the tenure of services of the erstwhile Block Physical Education Organisers, the Governor was also pleased to redesignate the 50 posts of Block Physical Education Organiser as Sub-divisional Sports Officers on permanent basis on the existing scale of pay in 1980 (13). During that time 31 Block Organisers were acting and all of them were re-designated as Sub-divisional Sports Officer and posted in 31 subdivisions in West Bengal (14).

It was a good proposal for the development of physical education in rural area under the District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare. It is needless to say that such posts were necessary to control the ground level administration in sports and physical education. Several seminars were arranged previously and many recommendations were made for such type of posts, but unfortunately the posts were abolished.

7.2.4 EFFORTS BY THE MINISTRY OF SPORTS

In their turn, Minister of Sports, Govt. of West Bengal, called upon the District Officers for Physical Education and other functionaries relating to sports and physical education in a meeting held on 15.7.72 (19). The Minister highlighted the following priority area and urge upon the concerned officers to implement the resolution of the meeting. The salient points of the then Sports Minister's suggestions were as follows:
1. Every attempt should be made to spread games and sports through out the districts particularly in the rural areas.

2. Attempts should be made to attract school and college students for active participation in different games and sports.

3. Available playgrounds may be best utilised in rotation by different educational institutions, clubs and associations in both rural and urban areas.

4. The problem of the paucity of suitable playgrounds may be partially solved by introducing small area games.

5. Necessary proposal for development of playgrounds may be submitted to the Government in regard to Khashmahal land.

7.2.5 GOVERNMENT TRAINING COLLEGE

From 1964 the intake of the trainee students was increased from 60 to 120. In 1965 Mr. P.K.Sen retired and Mr. K.K.Dutt was appointed as principal of the college. The college used to run both diploma & certificate courses. But since 1967 the certificate course was discontinued. In 1969, the college was affiliated to Calcutta University (20) and from 1969-1970 session the students were awarded with University Diploma instead of Govt. Diploma which was prevailing till 1969. Socio political turmoil mainly due to naxalite movement and influx of Bangladesh refugees during 1971, the college had to suspend its activities for two academic sessions 1971-1972 & 1972-1973. Sri. D.P.Chandra took the charge of the principal of the college in 1973 and the academic session resumed from August, 1973 with 50 students in that year.

7.3 WEST BENGAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

West Bengal Physical Education Association did some good job for the development of physical education in West Bengal during this period.
During 1964-1965 (24) the association conducted short course of physical education for the purpose of teachers working in schools, so that they can impart lessons after being trained. The association also conducted short seminars for exchange of views on introduction of compulsory physical education in schools (25). They also submitted during the period of 1964-1970 a number of memorandum to the Govt. and Govt. agencies with the demand of introduction of physical education in school curriculum.

From the foregoing information of the period from 1963-1973, it appears that development of physical education was not significant and purposeful. However, landmark during the period was the establishment of Department of Physical Education in Kalyani University. The report of the Kothari Commission and Deshmukh Committee made the educationists to think over the state of affairs of physical education in its total perspective and serious efforts for its introduction in schools and colleges were initiated during this period. The fitness drive scheme was introduced and the level of awareness of the educated masses regarding fitness improvement was enhanced. Appointment of Block Physical Education Organisers created enthusiasm among the rural areas. These efforts for last 25 years after independence resulted a giant leap in mid seventies and thereby development of physical education reached its peak during 1974 and onwards with a new dimension.
7.4 REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER - VII


5. Letter from Deputy Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal to All District Officers, Letter No. 670-(:6)-Edn. (Sports) dated 17-12-70.

5A. Letter from Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal to the District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare, Midnapore, Letter No. 4112 (39) A dated 21-8-71.

6. Letter from Deputy Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal to the Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal, Letter No. 2-Edn (Sports) dated 4.1.72.

7. .Letter from Deputy Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal to the Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal, Letter No. 332-Edn. (Sports ) dated 26.4.72.

8. Letter from District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare, Midnapore to the Deputy Director of Public Instruction ( Physical Education ), West Bengal, Letter No. 195 dated 18.4.74.
9. Letter from Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal to the District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare, Midnapore, Letter NO. 511 (6)-NFC dated 5.7.74.

10. Letter from Deputy Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal to the Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal, Letter NO. 403 Edn. (Sports) dated 14.3.1975.

11. Letter from Deputy Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal to the Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal, Letter No. 665-Edn (SE) dated 4.9.76.

12. Letter from Director of Public Instruction, West Bengal to the District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare, Midnapore, Letter No. 446(16) NFC, dated 19.10.76.

13. Letter from Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal, Education (Sports) Department, to the District Officer for Physical Education & Youth Welfare, Midnapore, Letter No. 1137(15)/2(80) Edn. Sports dated 16.7.80.


19. Minutes of the meeting held on 15.7.72 in the office chamber of Shri Prafulla Kanti Ghosh, Hon'ble Minister of Sports, Govt. of West Bengal, Calcutta : 1972.


25. West Bengal Physical Education Association, Report of the Seminar on Physical Education at School Level Primary to Higher Secondary, which was held in 1972, Calcutta : 1972.