

## Manipur State Sports Policies and the Achievement of Sportspersons at the Olympics

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Games and Sports have intertwined with the people of Manipur from the beginning. Manipur has many indigenous games and sports played by the people, important indigenous games and sports of Manipur are Sagol Kangjei, Thang-Ta & Sarit Sarak, Mukna, etc. Moreover, Manipur has produced 19 Olympians and among them there were three Olympic medalists namely, Mary Kom in boxing, Mirabai Chanu in weightlifting and Nilakanta Sharma in hockey. Examining the Manipur state sports policies 1992 and 2003 is the aim of the study. In conclusion, the achievement of Manipuri sportsperson in Olympics games will be analysed through qualitative study.

**Keywords:** games, sports, manipur, olympics, policy

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## 1. Introduction

From the ancient time the people of Manipur start playing different forms of Indigenous games and sports which include Saol Kangjei, Thang-Ta & Sarit Sarak, Khong Kangjei, Yubi Lakpi, etc. The main agency for the development of games and sports and implementation of policies and programmed in Manipur is the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports Government of Manipur (ManipurOnline.in, n.d.). Enchantingly, Manipur is known for the birthplace of the modern game "Polo", in the 1991, edition of the Guinness Book of Records on page number 288 engraves Origins of Polo can be traced to Manipur State c. 3100 B.C., which played in the form of "Sagol Kangjei" (Tombi Raj, n.d.). In fact, Sir Churachand Maharaj Singh was regarded as the pioneer and the founder of modern sports movement in Manipur. In 1935, he sent a cricket team to Shillong and played matches against European Clubs there. Most of the modern Games and Sports played in Manipur was introduced by the British. Furthermore, Olympic movement in Manipur began with the formation of the Manipur Olympic Association in 1947 with Shri RK Madhuryajit Singh and Shri N Binoy Singh as the founder President and Secretary respectively (Seram, 2013; Singh, n.d.). So far Manipur has produced 19 Olympians and among them there were three Olympic medalists namely, Mary Kom in boxing, Mirabai Chanu in weightlifting and Nilakanta Sharma in hockey.

## 2. Objective of the Study

1. To examine the Manipur state sports policy 1992.
2. To examine analyse the Manipur state sports policy 2003.
3. To analyse the achievement of Manipuri Sportspersons at the Olympic Games.

## 3. Methodology

A profound analysis will be conducted to detect the key basis of the Manipur state sports policies 1992 and 2003. Both primary and secondary data will use for collecting data. Interviews, news, official records, media reports, sports archives, etc, are the main sources of data analysis. Furthermore, statistical tools like tabulation will be positioned for the evaluation of the achievement of Manipuri sportspersons in the Olympics.

## 4. The Manipur State Sports Policy 1992

For the development of games and sports; and production of excellent sports persons at the international level, for the first time a Sports Policy of Manipur 1992 was drafted in consonance with the National Sports Policy adopted in 1984 by the government of India. The state shall emphasise to the following points below for the development of games and sports in Manipur (Government of Manipur, Department of Youth Affairs & Sports, n.d.):

1. Create infrastructure.
2. Facilitate adequate nutrition.
3. Identify talented youth.
4. Introduce sports & physical education in educational institutions as a compulsory subject.
5. Offer incentives.
6. Organise national and state level competitions.
7. Develop skills in the disciplines recognised by the Olympic, Commonwealth, Asian Games, and internationally recognised games for which World Federations exist.
8. Promote special category sports/games.
9. Priorities disciplines.
10. Upgrade and standard and sports training.
11. Provide wide exposure.
12. Promote sports & physical education through non-governmental institution.
13. Research centre for all round development of the sportspersons.
14. Provide employment opportunities.
15. Encourage one state association for each discipline.
16. Introduce welfare scheme for distressed sportspersons.
17. Create an agency for identification of sports talent.
18. Arrange sponsorship for promising and outstanding sportspersons.
19. Produced modern/scientific equipment.
20. Promote apex district sports association.
21. Strengthen the sports directorate.
22. Utilise mass media, etc.

## 5. The Manipur State Sports Policy 2003

Manipur continuously shown the great potential in the field of games and sports at the national and international levels. From the time immemorial various form of indigenous games and sports are intertwined with the people of Manipur. Whereas the Manipur State Sports Policy, 2003 was published, this policy succeeds the then Manipur State Sports Policy, 1992 and shall come into immediate effect by emphasis to the points following below (Government of Manipur, Department of Youth Affairs & Sports, 2003):

1. The objective of the Manipur state sports policy 1992 is yet to be achieved fully and its need for reformulating the state sports policy for promoting and developing games and sports in the state on idea of producing more sportspersons at the higher level.
2. The State Sport Policy 2003 was emphasis more cooperation and collaboration between the state government and the Manipur Olympic and state level sports association.
3. The state is committed to creation and proper maintenance of the Khuman Lampak Sports Complex.
4. The state is committed to creation of Sports infrastructure in the Hill Districts and rural areas of the state.
5. Identified and nurtured the talents youths, under the guidance of qualified trainer and coaches.
6. The integration of sports and physical education in the education will be initiate.
7. Incentives will continue to be provided to the excellent sportspersons who had achieved excellence in the national and international level.
8. The state associations shall organize at least three tournaments for both male and female, that is, senior, junior and sub-junior levels.
9. The state shall endeavor to develop skills in competitive discipline of the Olympic, Asian, Commonwealth and National Games.
10. The state shall endeavor to develop skills in internationally recognised game.
11. The state shall endeavor to develop skills in widely played indigenous games including martial arts of Manipur.
12. To upgrade the standard of achievement for a long-term plan and shall provide higher training to the coaches, judges, referee, etc.

13. Scientific backing to sports is an essential element of modern sports.

14. In line with the national Sports Policy, 2001, the state recognized that the management and development of sports in the state are the functions of the Manipur Olympic Association, State level sports associations, autonomous body and district level affiliated associations.

15. The state shall recognize only one state association for each discipline. For non-indigenous games the state association shall be affiliated to the national federation recognized by the government of India.

16. The state government will encourage and support the Manipur Olympic Association to organize state games every two years and similar district games every year.

17. Welfare scheme shall be instituted for distressed sportspersons who are injured in national or international championships.

18. The role of mass media in popularizing sports need no further emphasis.

19. The sports policy of 2003 will be reviewed periodically, etc.

## 6. Olympian of the State of Manipur

Nilakamal Singh was the first Olympian from Manipur who represented India in the Los Angeles Olympic Games, 1984 in Hockey. So far Manipur has produced 19(nineteen) Olympians and won three medals in the Olympics. The complete list of the Olympians from the state are as below (Ngasham et al., 2025): -

Sl. No.	Name	Category	Year(s)	Olympic Venue(s)
1	Pangambam Nilakomol Singh	Hockey	1984	Los Angeles
2	Kshetrimayum Thoiba Singh	Hockey	1988	Seoul
3	Soubam Suresh Singh	Boxing	2000	Sydney
4	Lourebam Brojeshori Devi	Judo	2000	Sydney
5	Ngangom Dingku Singh	Boxing	2000	Sydney
6	Thingbaijam Sanamacha Chanu	Weightlifting	2000, 2004	Sydney; Athens
7	Nameirakpam Kunjarani Devi	Weightlifting	2004	Athens
8	Khumujam Tombi Devi	Judo	2008	Beijing
9	Laishram Devendro Singh	Boxing	2012	London
10	Ngangbam Soniya Chanu	Weightlifting	2012	London

11	Laishram Bombayla Devi	Archery	2008, 2012, 2016	Beijing; London; Rio
12	Khadangbam Kothajit Singh	Hockey	2012, 2016	London; Rio
13	Thokchom Anuradha Devi	Hockey	2016	Rio
14	Kangujam Chinglensana Singh	Hockey	2016	Rio
15	Mangte Chungneijang Mary Kom	Boxing	2012, 2020	London; Tokyo
16	Pukhrambam Sushila Chanu	Hockey	2016, 2020	Rio; Tokyo
17	Saikhom Mirabai Chanu	Weightlifting	2016, 2020	Rio; Tokyo
18	Shanglakpam Nilakanta Sharma	Hockey	2020	Tokyo
19	Likmabam Sushila Devi	Judo	2020	Tokyo

## 7. Three Olympic Medallist of Manipur

Manipur is Known as the “Powerhouse of Sports” and three prominent sportsperson won Olympic medal and created history in different editions. The details are mention below (Team MyGov, 2021; Ramror, 2024; Hanjabam & Singh, 2022):

1. M.C. Mary Kom secured Bronze Medal in the London Olympic, 2012.
2. Saikhom Mirabai Chanu bagged Silver Medal in the Tokyo Olympics 2020 as India’s first medal.
3. Shanglakpam Nilakanta Sharma Hockey in the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

## 8. Findings

1. Manipur has many indigenous games played by the people, important indigenous games and sports of Manipur are Sagol Kangjei, Thang-Ta & Sarit Sarak, Mukna, etc.
2. The main agency for the development of games and sports and implementation of policies and programmed in Manipur is the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports Government of Manipur.
3. Manipur is known for the birthplace of the modern game “Polo”.
4. Churachand Maharaj Singh was regarded as the pioneer and the founder of modern sports movement in Manipur.
5. The formation of the Manipur Olympic Association in 1947 is the foundation of the Olympic movement in Manipur.

6. Shri RK Madhuryajit Singh and Shri N Binoy Singh are the pioneer of the Olympic movement in Manipur.

7. For the first time a Sports Policy of Manipur 1992 was drafted in consonance with the National Sports Policy adopted in 1984 by the government of India.

8. Later, the Manipur State Sports Policy, 2003 was published, which supersedes the then Manipur State Sports Policy, 1992.

9. Manipur has produced 19(nineteen) Olympians and won three medals in the Olympics.

10. M.C. Mary Kom secured Bronze Medal in the London Olympic, 2012.

11. Saikhom Mirabai Chanu bagged Silver Medal in the Tokyo Olympics 2020 as India’s first medal.

12. Shanglakpam Nilakanta Sharma Hockey in the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

13. The 5<sup>th</sup> edition National games held in Imphal in 1999, Manipur become the overall team champion and won prestigious raja Bhallendra Trophy.

## 9. Conclusion

Beside the indigenous games and sports the modern games and sports was introduced in Manipur during British Colonial era particularly after 1891. The oldest and living Polo ground is located in Manipur. Furthermore, for the development of games and sports in the state the Directorate of Youth affairs and sports government of Manipur, Sports Authority of India, North Eastern region Takyel, National Sports University, etc take important role. Manipur participated in national games of India since the first edition of 1985 held at New Delhi. Interestingly in the 5<sup>th</sup> edition National games held in Imphal in 1999, Manipur become the overall team champion and won prestigious raja Bhallendra Trophy (Singh, 2021). Revise, update and improvement to the Manipur State Sport Policy is very important. Additionally, incorporation of Olympian for better outcomes in future Olympic Games, coaching, monitoring, and establishment of world class sports facilities is required.

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