



Why does India lag behind in football?

Description

Theme:

- The Blue Tigers (nickname for the Indian football team) is currently competing to qualify for FIFA World Cup 2026. As of 30th November 2023, the Indian football team ranked 102nd in FIFA rankings.

The present status of football in India:

- In 1948, the Indian football team played its first-ever international match in the London Olympics. Later, in 1950, the Indian football team was qualified to play in the FIFA World Cup, but it didn't participate because, at that time, the Olympics were considered more prestigious than the World Cup.
- The Indian football team won many medals from 1951 to 1970. It won the gold medal in the 1951 Asian Games and got second place in the 1962 Asian Games & 1964 AFC Asian Cup. It also won a bronze medal at the 1970 Asian Games.
- But now, in FIFA rankings (as of 30th November 2023), Indian football team ranked 102nd in the world and 18th in Asia.
- Even though the popularity of non-cricket sports is slowly increasing, India is still lagging behind in football.
- As of 2023, India has four national-level leagues for football. The Indian Super League, I-League, I-League 2 and I-League 3.

Reasons for India's lag in football:

- Football doesn't receive much private investment, unlike other sports such as hockey.
- There is a lack of proper training grounds and other infrastructure for football.
- Even though the popularity of non-cricket sports is slowly increasing in India, still cricket is overshadowing many sports.

What can we do to improve India's ranking in Football:

- More private investment in football is needed.
- Upgrades to existing stadiums, the construction of new facilities, and improved training grounds, more quality trainers can help improve the Indian football team's rank.
- Identifying and nurturing talent from a young age is very much needed. Moreover, there is a need to create interest in football because still cricket is deeply ingrained in Indian culture.
- The government should take steps to send the Indian football team to all the possible international tournaments because exposure to top-tier competition provides a benchmark for improvement.

Conclusion:

The status of sports is improving in India. But the country is still lagging behind in the football sport. There is a need to increase private investments in football. More tournaments and better infrastructure are also needed to improve India's ranking in football.

Your Turn...

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References:

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