

Olympic Dreams

# Chinese Elite Sport and Olympics

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# Outlines

- **Historical Relations to the Olympics**
- **Chinese Communist Sports Policy and its Changes**
- **Olympic Strategy and the Development of Chinese Elite Sport**
- **Ambitions and Preparation for 2008 Olympics**
- **The development of Chinese Sport after the Olympics**

# Historical Relations to the Olympics

- **1896 Olympics: Historical Myths ?**
- **1922: First Chinese Wang Zhengting was elected into the IOC.**
- **1928 Olympics: China was invited to send observers**
- **1932: China was invited for the first time to send athletes for competitions --Liu Changchun.**
- **1936 Berlin Olympics: Chinese Sports Teams attended.**
- **1948: Games during Chinese Civil War**



# Sport and Olympics in People's Republic of China

- Establishment of PRC in 1949
- Re-establish of Chinese Sports Policy and System in a Socialist/Communist State.
- Sport was closely associated with its political objectives: **Communism and Nationalism.**

# Sports Policy in the Early Years of PRC (1949-1956)

- Rationalizing physical exercises and improving productivity.

*Chinese people were called “The Sick Men of the Far East” in the old society. Now, the Chinese people have to stand up in the world. We should take this label from our heads. Who is going to do this? Sport could undertake this arduous but glorious task. As communist members, we should devote ourselves into sports construction, which is also a great goal for the Chinese people.*

----He Long, 1949 (First Minister of the State Physical Education and Sports Commission)

*(Gu, 1997: p.87)*

# Sports Policy in the Early Years of PRC (1949-1956)

- Sport was asked to function to build healthy citizens.

*At present our sport must serve the people, serve national defense and serve people's health... In order to undertake the hard work of constructing our new country, sport should promote people's health physically and mentally. Students, workers, peasants, citizens, militants and civil servants all have to become involved in sport.*

----Zhu De, 1950 (Vice-President)

(Cited in Zhu, 1950: 7)

# Sports Policy in the Early Years of PRC (1949-1956)

**‘Developing sport and promoting people’s physique.’**

-----Mao Zedong, 1952 (Chairman)

- This slogan strengthened the main function of sport in this period and contribute to establishing the importance of sport in people’s lives.
- Sports policy focused on Mass Sports (physical exercises of citizens) and military sport (for defense reason) and elite sport barely existed.



# The Changes of Sports Policy

- **Turning Point: Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952.**

Who represented China? Beijing or Taibei?

*'It was a great victory simply to raise the national flag at the Olympic Games, whether the PRC could compete in the events or not. It meant Communist China had won an important political battle.'*

-----Zhou Enlai, 1952 (Prime Minister)



# The Changes of Sports Policy

- The state soon realised that **elite sport** had a powerful function in achieving status on the international stage.

*Sport is not just playing ball. It reflects our country's image, force, spirit and the superiority of our socialist construction. The achievements in sports are the glory of our country and people.*

--- Chen Yin, 1963 (Vice-Prime Minister )

*Cited from Xin tiyu 1963 no.5: 12*

# Sports Policy since 1956

- **Objects:** to consolidate the national identity by erasing the image of Chinese as sick men of East Asia and win honor through high performances on the international sports stage.
- **Focus:** Sports Ministry changed its policy from promoting people's exercise into producing elite sports stars.
- **Elite sports system was formally set up in 1956.**
  - 43 Competitive sports
  - Professional sports teams
  - National Championship and National Games
  - Youth Spare-time Sports Schools
  - Intensive training
- **Result:** New Era of Elite Sport started in China

# The Olympic Strategy

- **Background**

- Ping-Pang Diplomacy
- PRC regained her membership of the IOC in 1979.
- Achievements in Olympics and International competitions.
- 1984 Olympics success occupied China's attention.

- **Olympic Strategy was put forward in 1985**

*'Elite Sport is the guide.'*

*'The highest of Chinese sport is success in the Olympic Games. We must concentrate our resource on it.'*

# The Olympic Strategy

- **Debates in 1990s**

‘Olympic Strategy’ (elite) VS ‘National Fitness Programme’ (Mass sport)

- **Elite Sport is still in the priority over mass sport in the sports community.**
- **The success of bidding to host 2008 Olympic Games strengthened Olympic Strategy and stimulated China’s ambition of becoming a sporting world power.**

*‘The quest for the Olympics was to raise national morale and strengthen the cohesion of Chinese people both in the mainland and overseas.’ ---Jiang Zeming*



# *Development of Elite Sports System: Juguo tizhi*

(Whole country support for the elite sport system)

- *Juguo tizhi* is originally a specific administrative system and mechanism of Chinese sport.
- The **essence** of ‘*Juguo tizhi*’ is to utilize the administrative channels to allocate social resources and develop the level of competitive sport in order to win glories for the nation.’
- **Historical development of *Juguo tizhi***
  - 1950s initiated ideas
  - 1980s demonstrate this idea and put it into practices.
  - 2000s being strengthened

# *Juguo tizhi System*

(Whole country support for the elite sport system)

## **- Methods**

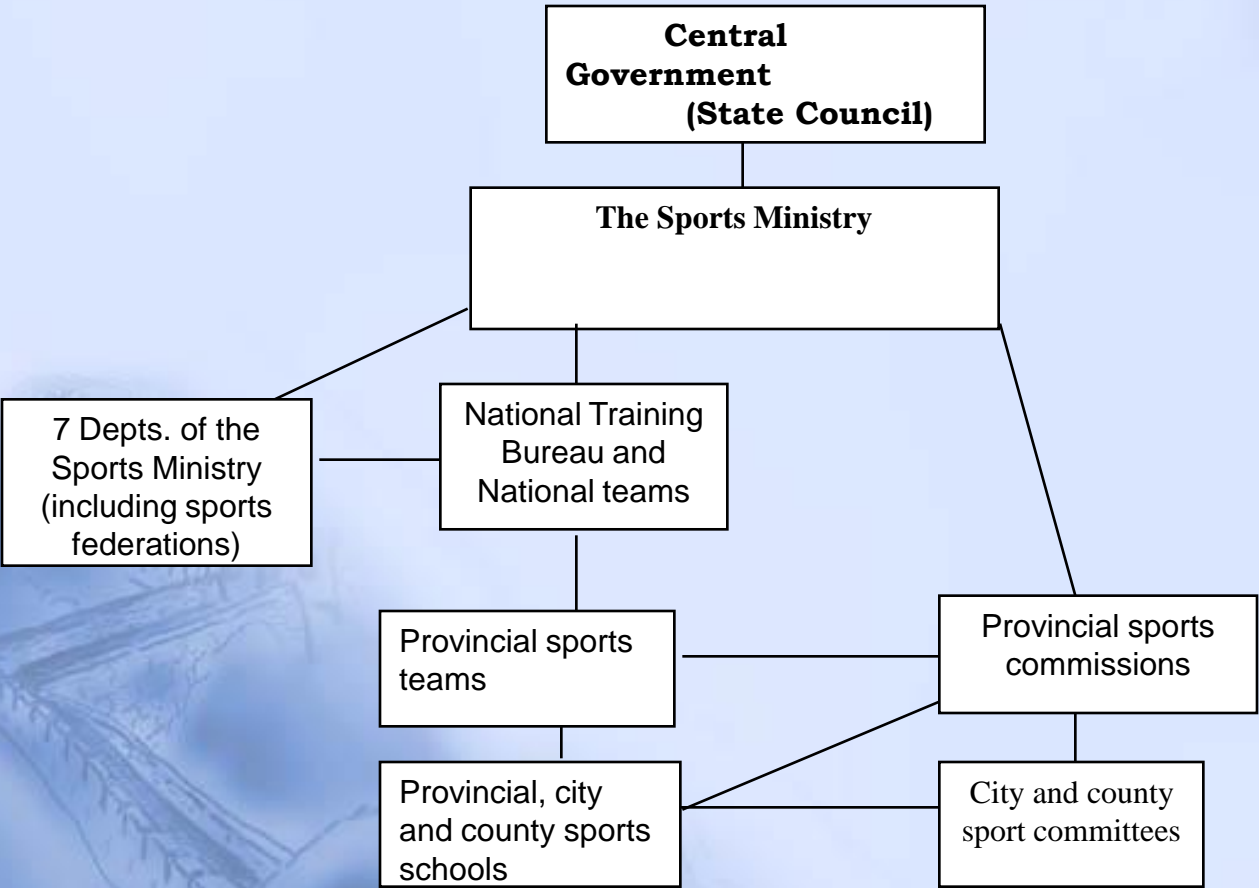
To integrate sports administrative system, athletes selective and management system, sports teams' training system and sports competition system and make sure elite sport be guided by the central government, run by plans, managed by administrative methods.

## **- Just functions for improving the level of elite sport**

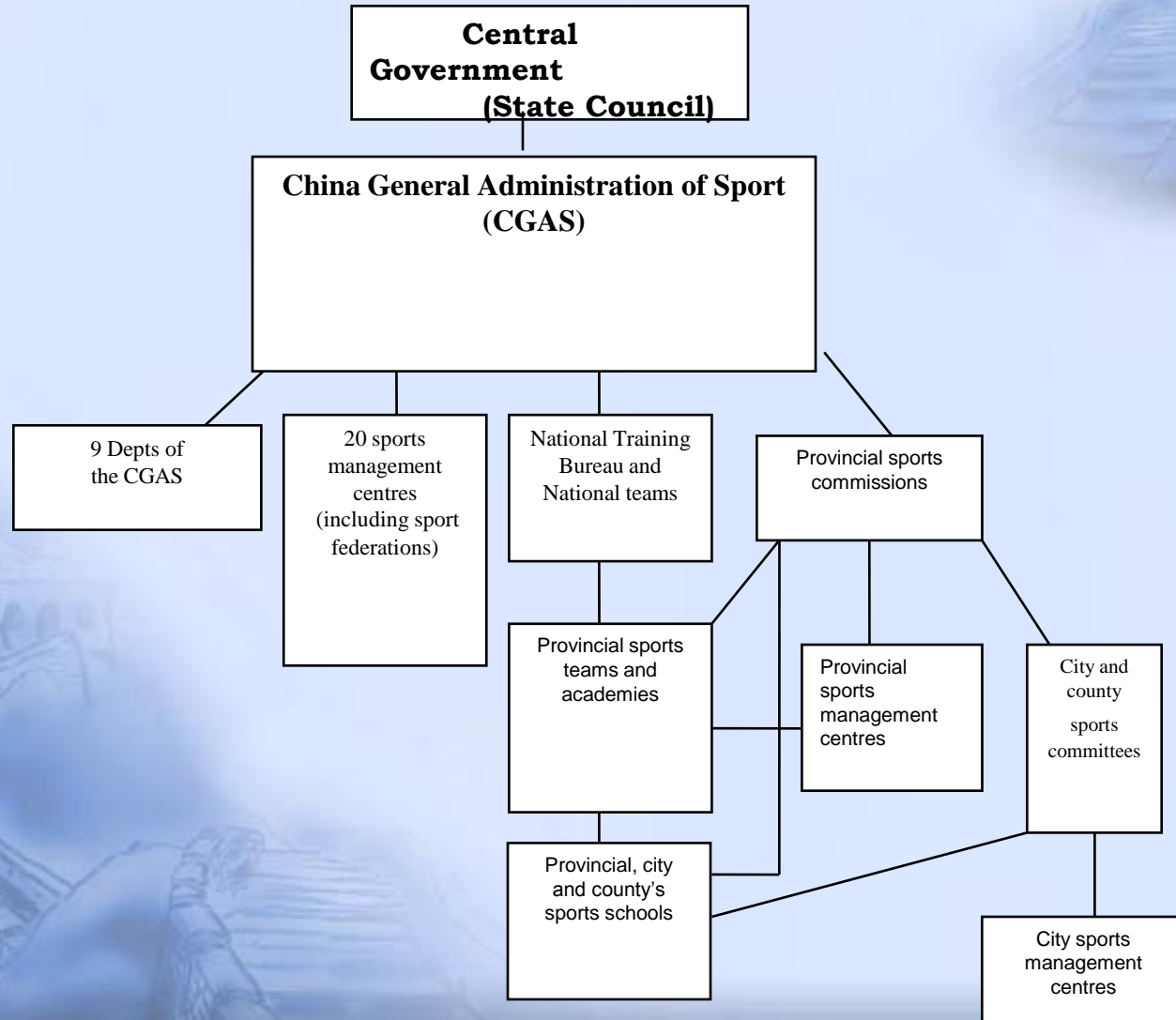
**-It is the embodiment of China's political objects and ideologies, which is the specific characteristic from some western countries.**

# Centralized Sports Administration

Administrative Structure of Chinese Sport 1956-1996



# Administrative Structure of Chinese Sport 1997-2005





# Resources

- Six departments to elite sport, one department to mass sport in Sports Ministry.
- Elite sport consumed 80% of the state's sporting budget; elite sports teams are major beneficiaries
- Increased professional coaches working in elite sports teams
- Increased research projects associated with the games and competitions.

# Resources

Funds for Outstanding Sports Teams and its percentage in Chinese Sports Funds 1991-1997

	<b>Funds</b>	<b>Ration of Sports Funds %</b>
<b>1991</b>	<b>40000.00</b>	<b>22.00</b>
<b>1992</b>	<b>44000.00</b>	<b>24.00</b>
<b>1993</b>	<b>56000.00</b>	<b>25.00</b>
<b>1994</b>	<b>60000.00</b>	<b>30.00</b>
<b>1995</b>	<b>80000.00</b>	<b>32.00</b>
<b>1996</b>	<b>100000.00</b>	<b>34.00</b>
<b>1997</b>	<b>120000.00</b>	<b>30.00</b>

# Athletes Selective System

- Four-tiered selective system.



# Sports Training System

- Three-level of Training programme.
- Full-time professional coaches.
- Army training methods (Traditional)
- Scientific training methods
- Training camp programme.
- National and International Competitions.



# Olympic Ambitions in 2008

- Guidelines: two documents

  - ‘*The Outline Strategy for Winning Olympic Medals 2001-2010*’

  - ‘*The Strategic Plan for Winning Olympic Medals in 2008*’

- Olympic Sports Selections (four categories)

  - Traditional Olympic sports – maintain the dominance
  - Capable Olympic sports – win more medals
  - Potential Olympic sports – targeted for more medals
  - Weak Olympic sport – reach the qualifying standard

# Olympic Ambitions in 2008

- Olympic Athletes increasing

- Expanding the number of teams: National teams, the youth team and resource team.
- Expanding the number of athletes
- Each sports team is to be given specific targets for the number of the medals expected.

- Olympic Resource Increasing

40 billion yuan (US\$ 4.88 billion) funding and 90% of them are used to pay the wages of athletes and coaches, build facilities/buy equipment.

- Olympic Competition Preparation

# Trend of Sports Development after the Olympics in 2008

- Cooling down of the Olympic Fever.
- Decentralisation of sports administrative system.
- Marketilisation
- Commercialisation
- Socialization
- Rapid growth of sports activities at the grassroots.

# Conclusion

- **China has a long and complex relations with Olympics since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.**
- **In history, China's sport, Olympics and politics were always intertwined.**
- **The essential object of China's sport was to win glories for the nation through the international competition.**
- **To achieve this goal, China established centralised elite sports system.**
- **2008 Olympic Games strengthened elite sports system.**
- **Reformation of sports system is an unavoidable process and new concept of sports development will be formed.**





**Thank you!**