

Be Active and healthy to beat COVID-19



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We are all concerned about corona virus these days. Whether a developed nation likes United States or country like India it has affected all corners of the world. The COVID-19 pandemic is spreading to more countries, territories and regions of the world at an alarming rate and physical and social distancing practices are becoming commonplace to stop the spread of the disease.

Social distancing means no activity outside homes which is restricting many positive things like doing morning walks or doing physical exercises in parks, play grounds or even gyms. Individual are also avoiding physical activities outside as all are lock down around us. Social distancing and lock down means we are not suppose to go out but still we can continue our physical exercises inside homes. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week, or a combination of both. WHO also have some tips on how to achieve this with no equipment and with limited space. There is an abundance of free and accessible online and digital tools targeted at encouraging people of all ages and abilities to stay active and mobile while remaining at home.

From the agers we have seen that sport has the power to change the world; it is a fundamental right, a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and promote sustainable development and peace and well as solidarity, and respect. Any sporting events bring people from different communities or countries together which is a positive sign. It enhances amity and friendship amongst people from different background.

In the lead up to and on 6 April, the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace let everyone of us to be active, stay healthy and demonstrate solidarity during this period of physical and social distancing. Sport has historically played an important role in all societies, be it in the form of competitive sport, physical activity or play. In response to global developments concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, this year the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace will focus on the health benefits of participating in sporting and physical activity, especially in this time of uncertainty and social distancing.

Sport has proven to be a cost-effective and flexible tool in promoting peace and development objectives. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sport's role for social progress is further acknowledged: "Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives."

6th April was declared as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) by the UN General Assembly. The adoption of this Day signifies the increasing recognition by the UN of the positive influence that sport can have on the advancement of human rights, and social and economic development. In its Resolution (A/RES/67/296) establishing the Day, the UN General Assembly "invites States, the United Nations system and, in particular, the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, relevant international organizations, and international, regional and national sport organisations, civil society including, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and all other relevant stakeholders to cooperate, observe and raise awareness of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace."

We are aware that sport encourages individual development apart from health promotion and disease prevention. It also enhances the promotion of gender equality, communication and social mobilisation apart from many others. Sports can be a tool for peace building in conflict zones and many organisations have done it. It also helps in promotion of life skills and makes right choices in life. As this year's theme focuses on beating COVID 19, so, let us use sports to keep ourselves healthy and active and beat the virus.

(With direct inputs from UN publication and feedback may be sent to bkranjan@gmail.com)

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