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## X. Sports and games

The establishment of **Cercle Sportif** in Pondicherry in 1907 is the earliest proof available of popular interest in modern sports and games in the Territory. This institution had been in the forefront of many constructive efforts seeking to promote sports, games, tournaments and competitions in Pondicherry. Since 1929, the Cercle organised several All India Tournaments. Tournaments in such different games as tennis, foot-ball, volley-ball, badminton, 'petanque' and table-tennis, besides such indoor games as chess, carroms and baby-foot were arranged from time to time. Interestingly even cricket seems to have been played here in those days. Poet Subramania Bharathi is reported to have spoken on the 'evils of caste distinctions' at the Pondicherry Progressive Union Cricket Club in 1912. Since then many institutions, clubs and associations have sprung up to encourage various games in the Territory. One may mention here the Modern Club, the Pondicherry Sports Group, the Friends Ball Badminton Association, the Karaikal Sports Clubs, La Lumière, Union Sportive,-Eclair, Cercle Jean d'Arc, Hindu Union and Triumph. Foot-ball players like Bala (alias Ranjan), Maxime de la Victoire, Sivarajalingam, Pascal and Kali and badminton players Veerasamy Chettiar and Santhanam Ignace and Chess player Ravichandran through their success have brought a name for Pondicherry.

The growth of these games in turn led to the creation of separate associations for foot-ball, tennis, cricket, volley-ball, badminton and chess with regular office-bearers. Some of these associations which are affiliated to All India bodies organise tournaments and competitions from time to time.

The Pondicherry Foot-ball Association was extended financial assistance for holding the Presidency Foot-ball Tournament. Teams representing the Territory are also deputed to compete in tournaments held elsewhere in the country.

Region-wise details of popular games are given below :

Pondicherry	Karaikal	Mahe	Yanam
Ball Badminton	Ball Badminton	Ball Badminton	Ball Badminton
Foot-ball	Foot-ball	Foot-ball	Indigenous Kabadi
Volley-ball	Volley-ball		

Games such as swimming, lawn tennis, hockey, basket-ball suffer for want of facilities.

One game that is peculiar to Pondicherry is the 'Pétanque' usually played by grown-ups and the middle aged. The game is played with iron balls weighing from 0.600 kg. to 0.800 kg. which are even now obtained from Marseilles, the International Headquarters of this game.

The All India Council of Sports and the Nehru Yuvak Kendra are the central agencies coordinating, aiding and assisting the growth of sports and games in the Territory. The Pondicherry State Sports Council was formed in 1968 with a view to encouraging the growth of sports and games in the Territory. The Sports Council also considers requests for financial assistance from recognised associations.

#### Physical Education :

The Inspectorate of Physical Education was created only on 2 January 1958 to take care of physical education in all primary, middle and secondary schools both under public and private managements. On 1 October 1965, the set-up was expanded and came to be called as the Chief Inspectorate of Physical Education to deal with all problems of physical education in the Territory. All aspects of physical education in colleges is attended to by the University Sports Branch as well as the Inter-Collegiate Athletic Associations of the respective universities although the Inter-Collegiate Youth Festival is held under the auspices of the Chief Inspectorate. The holding of the Civil Services tournaments is also the concern of the Chief Inspectorate. The Chief Inspector of Physical Education is the Ex-Officio Liaison Officer for purposes of the National Physical Efficiency Drive.



The distribution of permanent and floating categories of equipments is one of the main responsibilities of the Chief Inspectorate. The proper utilisation of these equipments is watched by the District Educational Officers and the Deputy Inspectors of Schools. Lack of playground facilities in schools stand in the way of providing proper physical education to students in schools. Only some of the newly opened schools are provided with adequate playground facilities. Foot-ball, volley-ball and ball-badminton are popular among school boys. Games such as cricket, lawn tennis and hockey suffer for want of facilities.

Although no regular coaching programmes are arranged either for athletics or field games, the services of coaches deputed by the National Institute of Sports are availed of. The services of such coaches are even requisitioned when necessary. Since the inception of the Chief Inspectorate two coaching camps were held, one for foot-ball and another for volley-ball in both of which 51 players participated.

## XI. Cultural, Literary and Scientific Societies

### *Institut Français :*

The establishment of the French Institute in Pondicherry was the outcome of the initiative of Dr. K.M. Panikkar, the historian and Dr. Jean Filliozat, the indologist. It took concrete shape with the agreement of 12 August 1954 which provided for the opening of an Institute in Pondicherry for continuing the researches of **Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient**. The Institute was inaugurated on 21 March 1955.\*

The scope of research activities of the institute was widened in 1956 with the addition of a Scientific Section devoted to the study of the natural conditions of life of the people of India. This section came to be established as a result of meetings held in 1955 between Prof. Homi Bhabha, the then Director of the Tata Institute for Fundamental Research and Prof. Dupuy Director-General of **Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris**.

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\* Article 24 of the Treaty of Cession reads: The French Institute of Pondicherry set up by an understanding reached between the two Governments since the 21 October 1954 agreement and inaugurated on the 21 March 1955, shall be maintained as a research and advanced educational establishment. The Indian Government shall provide such suitable facilities to further the development and activities of the said Institute, as agreed upon between the two Governments from time to time.