



## Speech by H.E. Mrs. Indira Gandhi

*Prime Minister of India*





The Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi made the following speech here today after receiving the "Olympic Order Gold" from H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, President, International Olympic Committee.

The very word 'Olympic' is a symbol of courage and endurance and of other high ideals. For us in India, it is a privilege to have the eminent representatives of this great movement in our city. I welcome them all and the gracious ladies who have accompanied them.

I am deeply grateful for the honour which you have bestowed on me, Mr. President and Members of the International Olympic Committee, by awarding me its Medal. I feel this honour belongs much more to our young people and those who are young at heart whatever age they may be — without whose hard work and enthusiasm India could not have found the place in the world of sports and games.

Our Indian tradition in games, as in many other areas, is an ancient one. It is celebrated in our epics and in our legends. In my own family, my grandfather, Motilal Nehru, did a great deal to promote wrestling and even took Indian wrestlers to various cities in Europe. I myself was — I don't know whether to use the word 'victim' or the 'beneficiary' of my father's training in running. Whatever the weather, whether here in the heat of India or in the cold of a Swiss winter, I had to run in the morning not only for speed but much greater stress was laid on the style and elegance. I was also fortunate that practically all the schools I attended were very keen on Athletics and we had to spend a great deal of time outdoors exerting ourselves. We didn't always like it then but looking back on it I am grateful to them.

Lately, however, it seems to me that many people in India were more keen in watching than in actual participation. The recently held IXth Asian Games which H.E. Mr. Samaranch was kind enough to attend have brought out the latent interest in games and have encouraged many to feel more involved and to take up various sporting activities.

Ours is a highly competitive world and so are games. There is tension in work and contem-

porary living. In games it is doubly so but with a difference. In sports the aggression is tempered by a spirit of togetherness and cooperation. Our world is wellrounded and well balanced, yet humans look at it and its immediate problems in fragments. In India we believe in co-existence, in living and working together on this earth, since we have no other. Games cut across barriers of nationality, class, creed, race, politics and ideology.

How does a personality grow — by trying out its skill and energy and stressing its faculties, physical and mental, to the utmost and beyond. It is this desire to test oneself that urges people to attempt difficult feats and to go on dangerous expeditions. As the poet has written:

"Nothing is enough,  
No, though our all be spent.  
All that nerve can feel  
All that brain invent,  
Nothing is enough"

That is the spirit and the endeavour which makes possible the breaking of records and reaching out to ever higher achievements.

Once more I thank you warmly, Sir. Once more I express my great pleasure of having amongst us such distinguished personalities. May you have a useful, interesting and enjoyable stay. I give you my good wishes on my own behalf, on behalf of the Government and the people of India. Once more thanks.

I.G.

