

Experts weigh in on benefits of physical health | The Express Tribune

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ISLAMABAD:

Speakers at a webinar lauded the fact that Pakistan had tremendous talent and despite lack of facilities and opportunities, its athletes outperformed tough competitors.

“Our footballs have reached the FIFA World Cup; it’s time we made our footballers reach there too,” the speakers of the webinar, conducted by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) on Sports and Society in Islamabad, expressed these views Sunday.

According to a press statement issued from the PIDE, the main theme of the discussion was Pakistani Society's mindset towards health, fitness, and sports. “We as a society are not conscious of preventive health measures, and neither do we appreciate the importance of physical health. In the modern world, where technology has replaced and shaped many things, one of them is a lack of physical activity,” the statement quoted the speakers as saying.

“From pizza delivery to shopping, every aspect of our life is influenced by technology. But as much as technology has brought positives, it has also brought with it some unwanted side effects. The major one of those is that e-entertainment through gadgets has, in a way, replaced physical sports,” it said and added that there was a time when young school boys used to get their badminton racket or cricket bat and ball at every opportunity they got and street cricket and street footballs were a common sight in the evening.

However, now all the physical activity has been replaced online gaming and services etc.

The speakers of the webinar included Dr Ameer Ali Abro from the University of Sindh, Nasrullah Rana, a fitness coach and expert of the Pakistan Strength and Conditioning Association, and Shan Muhammad Sham who represented Pakistan's national karate team from 1999 to 2004 and remained the coach of the Pakistan Wada Karate team.

Nasrullah Rana deliberated in detail on the mindset of the parents as he had experienced during his career as a coach. "Parents think that there is a trade-off between physical health and academics" was a complaint he said he often had to deal with as a coach. Rana emphasised the importance of sports in maintaining physical, mental, and cognitive health. The veteran coach stressed the importance of raising awareness among parents and school administration about the importance of sports.

The webinar ended with final comments by Fida Muhammad Khan from the PIDE School of Social Sciences, saying that Pakistan has tremendous talent, and our athletes

outperformed tough competitors despite the lack of facilities and opportunities. “We, as research institutions, should find ways to solve the problems of the sports industry in the country. Our football has reached FIFA; it’s time that we as a research institution try to find a solution that how will our footballers reach FIFA world cup,” he said.

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