

The Role of China in the Olympic Movement and the Impact of the Beijing Games



The biggest event in China since the communist revolution of 1949

- “For the Chinese people, it is going to be a big, big thing. ... It is not just an opening ceremony for the Olympics - it is a way of showing the world China and what is happening now”.

Zhang Yimou, Director of the opening and closing ceremony of the Beijing Olympics.

China and the Olympics: A History

- In 1895, the Qing government received the invitation but no interest in participate.
- In 1904 when the third Olympics took place “Olympic Games” appeared on newspapers.
- In 1908 the ‘Three Questions’.

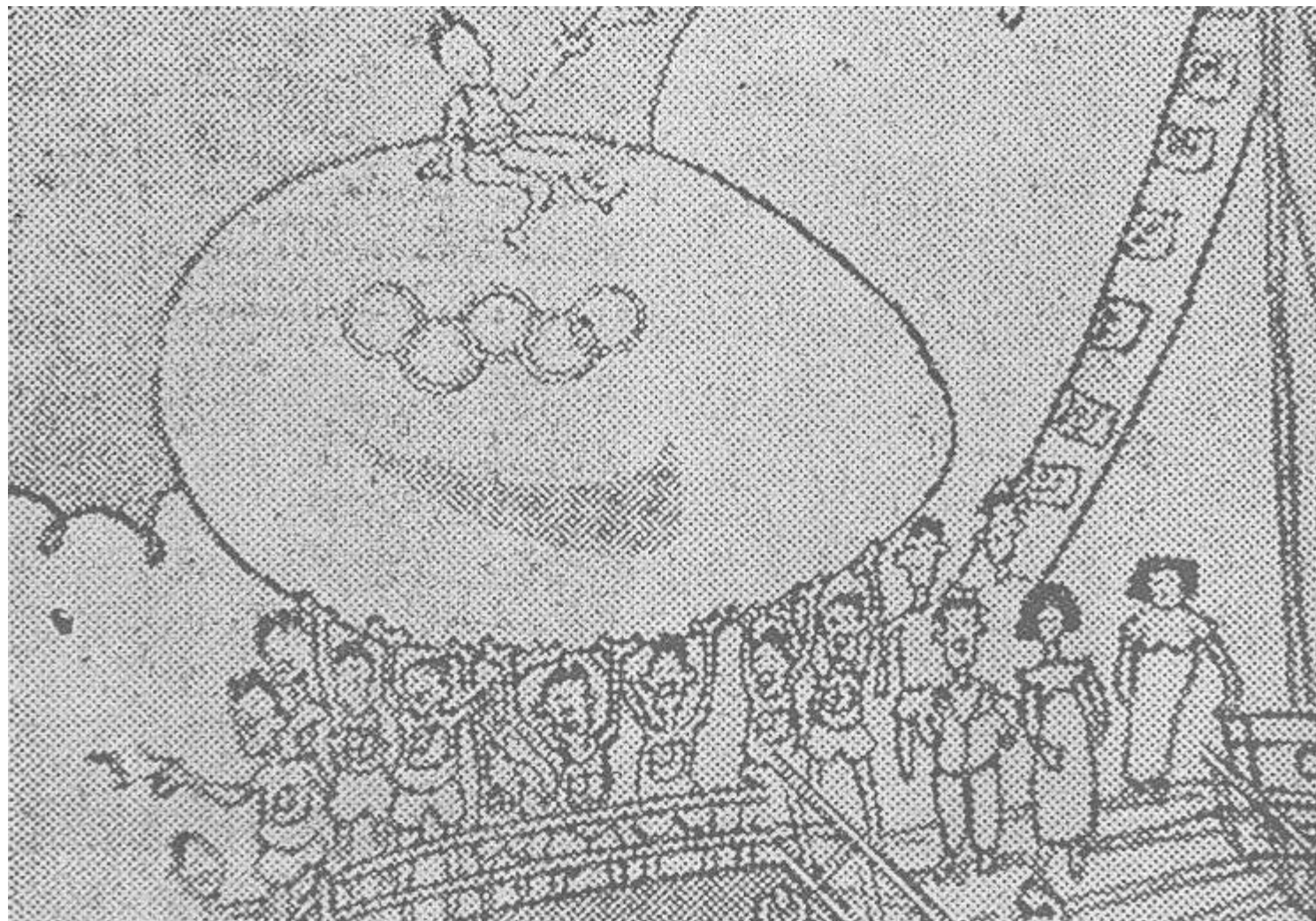
China and the Olympics: A History

- In 1915 contact between China and the IOC began.
- In 1922, Wang Zhenting (1882-1961) became the first IOC member from China.
- In 1928 China sent one observer, Mr Song Ruhai, to the 9th Games.
- In 1932 China sent Liu Changchun and his coach to the 10th Games.



China and the Olympics: A History

- In 1936 China sent 141 athletes to the 11th Olympic Games.
- In 1939 Kung Xiang-xi became a member of IOC.
- In 1947 Dong Shouyi became a member of the IOC.
- In 1948 China sent 35 athletes to the London Olympics.



Politics and the Games

‘Two Chinas Issue’

- In 1952 PRC participated in the Helsinki Olympic Games.
- In 1958 PRC withdrew from the IOC and the Olympic Games due to the “Two China Issues”.
- Between 1956 and 1976 Taiwan represented China at the IOC and the Olympic Games.

China and the Olympics: A History

- In 1972, Lord Killanin, the new IOC President, began dialogue between the IOC and the PRC.
- In 1977, Lord Killanin visited Beijing.
- In 1979, PRC returned to the IOC under the “Olympic Formula”.
- In 1979 Deng Xiaoping stated that China should host an Olympic Games when the time was right.
- In 1993 Beijing bided for the 2000 Olympic Games, losing to Sydney by two votes.
- In 2001 Beijing bided again for the 2008 Olympic Games and succeeded.

Reasons

- Accomplishment of political system
- International esteem
- National unity and identity
- Economic power
- Elite sport development

China's Records Ascent

- 1984 Los Angeles Olympics: 15 gold medals & came fourth
- 1988 Seoul Olympics: 5 gold medals & came 11th
- 1992 Barcelona Olympics: 16 gold medals & came fourth
- 1998 Atlanta Olympics: 16 gold medals & came fourth
- 2000 Sydney Olympics: 28 gold medals & came third
- 2004 Athens Olympics: 36 gold medals & came second

Victory in Athens 2004

- 407 Chinese competed in 203 events and won 32 gold, 17 silver and 14 bronze medals.
- With 63 medals in total, China came third in the medal rankings after the USA and Russia.
- With 32 gold medals China beat the Russians and came second to the USA.
- Furthermore, 6 new world records were established by Chinese athletes and they beat Olympic records 21 times.

Liu Xiang's Victory

- Liu Xiang won China's first Olympic gold medal in athletics competition.
- His victory broke the myth that Chinese athletes could not compete in serious sport because of their smaller and less masculine physique.

“It proves that Chinese people, Asian people and yellow-skinned people are able to do well in track events.” – (Liu Xiang)

The Chinese Elite Sports System

- It learned from the Soviet Union in the 1950s
- It developed its own character in the 1980s.
- It is called 'Juguo Tizhi' in Chinese
- English translation: the “whole-country support for the elite sports system”

China’s Participation in the Summer Olympics 1984-2004

Games	Year	Host City	Gold Medals	Silver Medals	Bronze Medals	Total Medals	Gold Medal Ranking
23	1984	Los Angeles	15	8	9	22	4
24	1988	Seoul	5	11	12	28	7
25	1992	Barcelona	16	22	16	54	4
26	1996	Atlanta	16	22	12	50	4
27	2000	Sydney	28	16	15	59	3
28	2004	Athens	32	17	14	63	2

Juguo tizhi

- Jiang Zemin, the General Secretary of the Party, claimed in 2000:

The success of American sport depends on its economic power; the success of Russian sport depends on its rich resource and experience of training elite athletes; the success of Chinese sport depends on 'Juguo tizhi' - the 'whole-country support for the elite sport system' ”



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Juguo tizhi

- Definition by Yuan Weimin, the Sports Minister:

The meaning of ‘Juguo tizhi’ was that the central and local governments use their power to channel adequate financial and human resources available throughout the country to support elite sport in order to win glory for the nation.

- The distinguishing characteristics of ‘Juguo tizhi’ include:
 - **its policy embodies China’s political objects**
 - **its administrative and management system is centralized**
 - **it functions only for improving the level of elite sport through a special selective and training system.**

Sports Policy

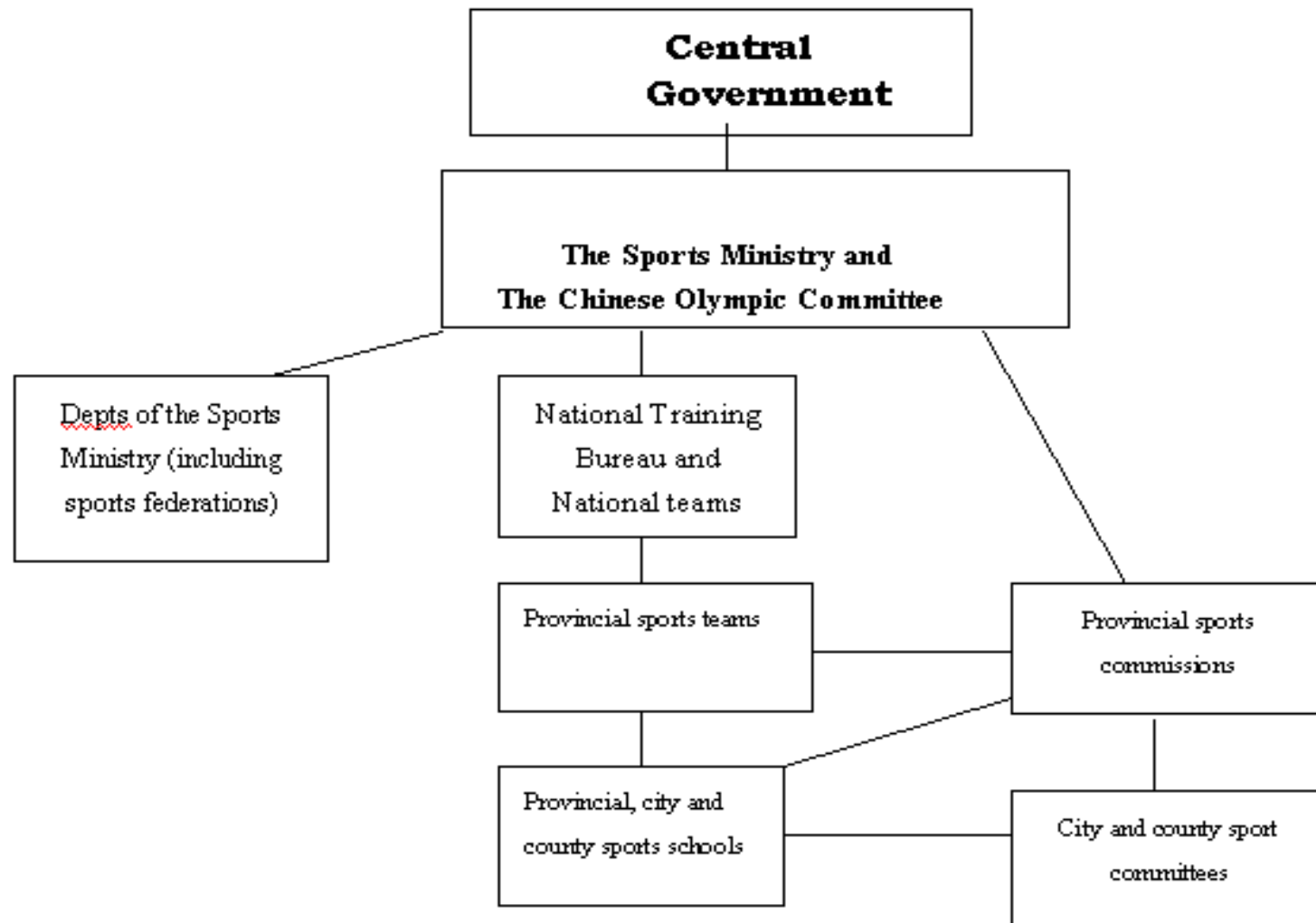
- The Olympic Strategy (1985)

“The highest aim of Chinese sport is success in the Olympic Games. We must concentrate our resources on it. To raise the flag at the Olympics is our major responsibility”

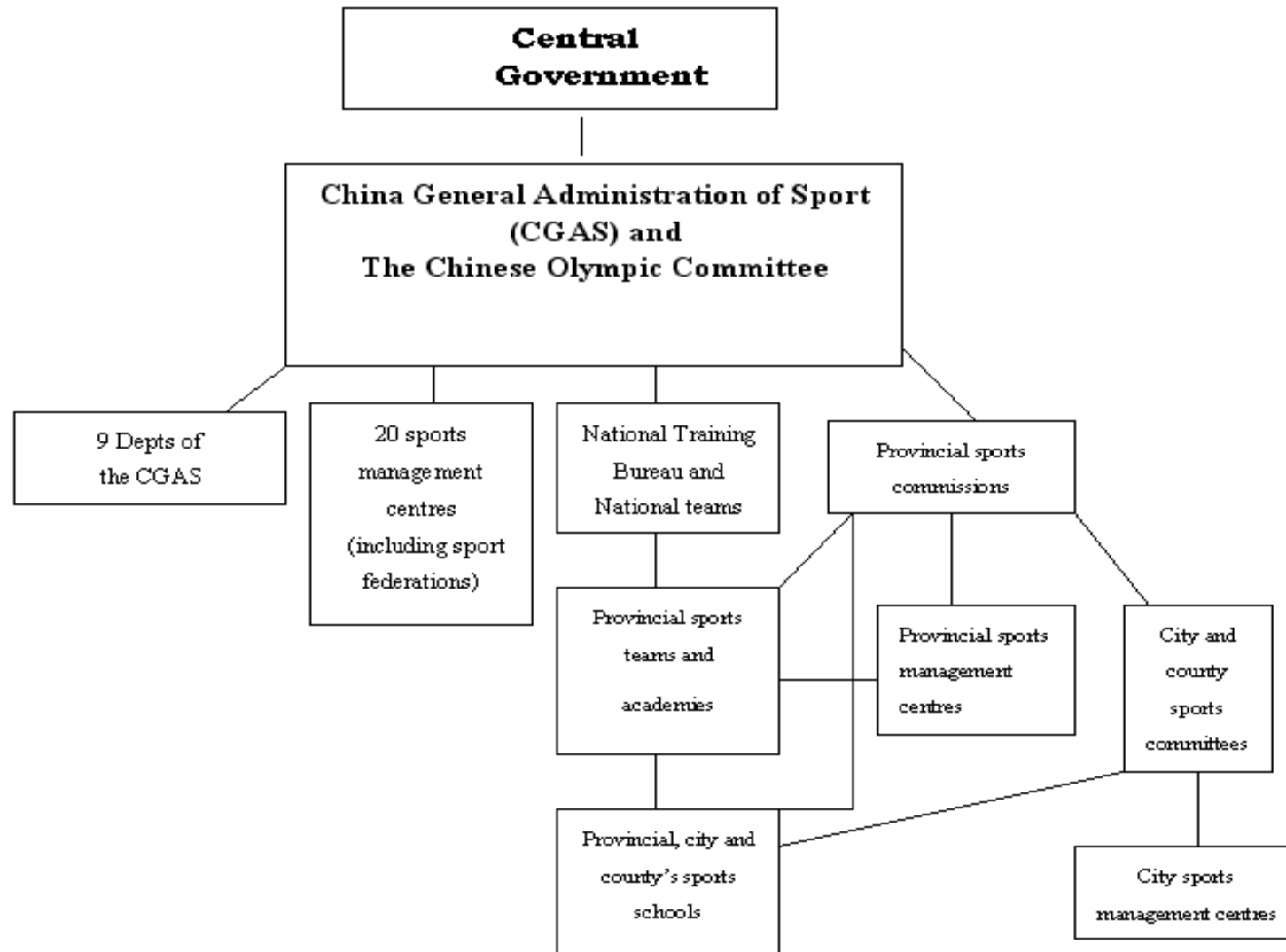
— Wu Shaozu,
the Minister of Sport, 1990-2000

Sports Administrative System

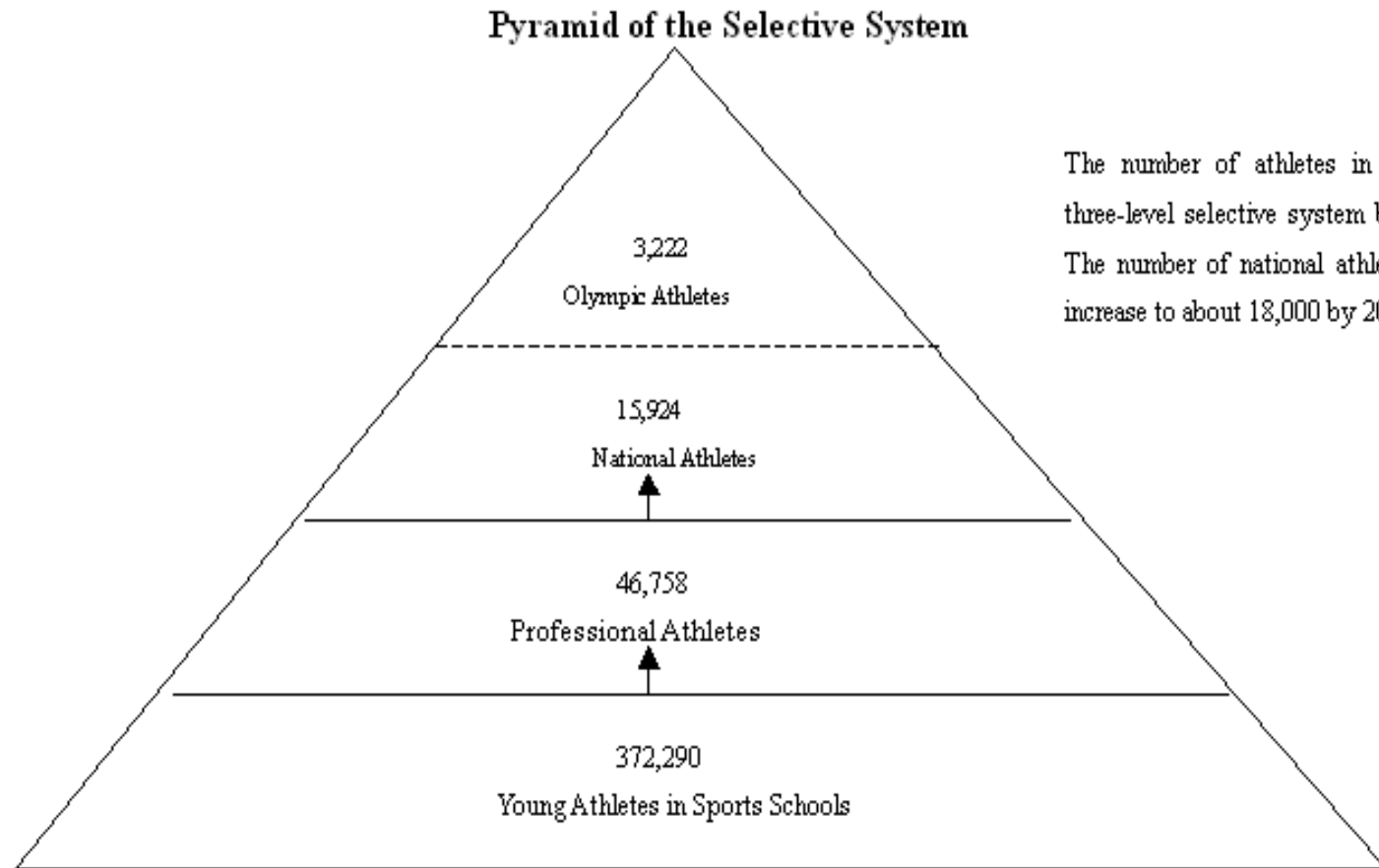
1952-1996



Administrative Structure of Chinese Sport 1997-2005



Athletes Selection System



The number of athletes in China's three-level selective system by 2004. The number of national athletes will increase to about 18,000 by 2008.

Sources: Sports Training Department of China General Administration of Sport

Juguo tizhi

- The Olympic medal oriented policy, the centralized sports administrative and management system, the selection and training system, in short, the entire Chinese elite sports system is to erect a “human ladder” for a handful of exceptional athletes to win gold medals at the Olympic summit.

Beijing's Plan for Olympic Victory

- The Party and the Central Government
 - “Strengthening and Progressing Sport in the New Era” (July 2002)
- The Sports Ministry
 - “The Outline Strategy for Winning Olympic Medals 2001-2010” (November 2002)
 - “The Strategic Plan for Winning Olympic Medals in 2008” (November 2002)



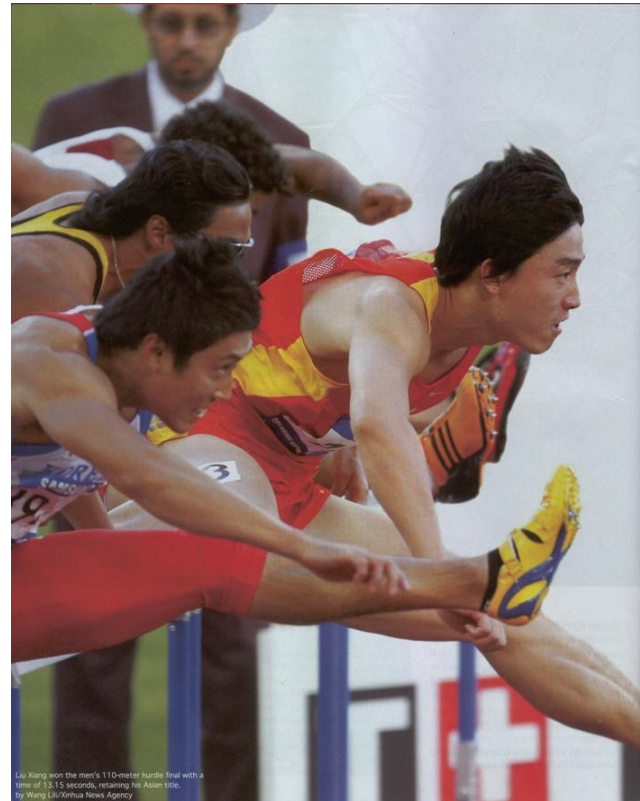
The Strategy

- *Olympic Sports Selection*
- *Olympic Athletes Training*
- *Olympic Resources Increasing*
- *Olympic Competition Preparation*

Doha Warm-up

China's Athletes Prep for 2008

- 647 athletes competed at the Doha Asian Games. Of these, 413 were newcomers
- Average age: 23.3
- They took 165 gold medals



Liu Xiang won the men's 110-meter hurdle final with a time of 13.15 seconds, retaining his Asian title, by Wang Lili/Xinhua News Agency

Beijing's Ambitions

- **Challenge the USA**
- **Overtake the USA**
- **Become the new premier sports superpower in the 2008 Olympic Games**
- **51 gold and 100 medals overall (China)**
- **36 gold and 110 medals overall (USA)**

Economic Impact

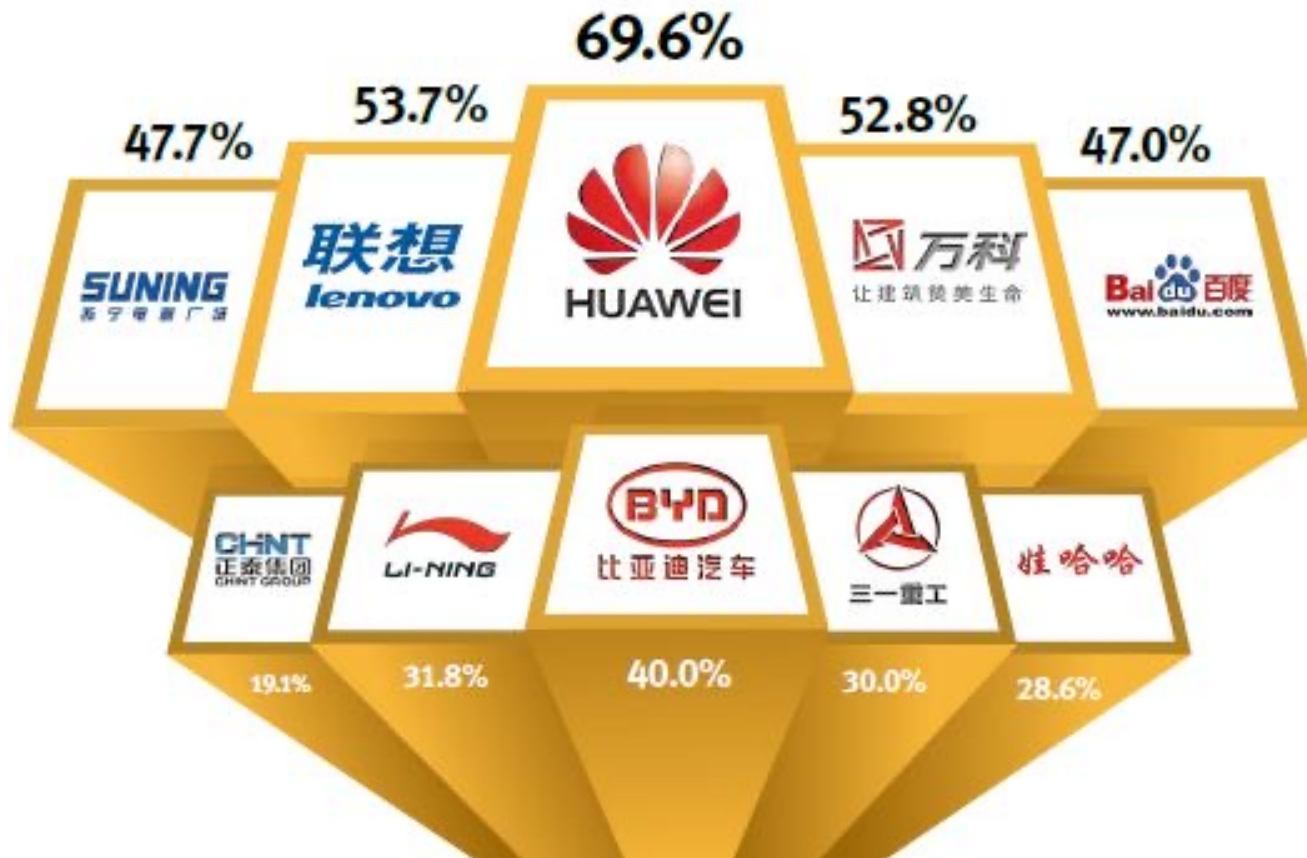
The IOC provided one billion dollars from TV rights and sponsorship to Beijing

1.82 million jobs were created

Beijing subway expanded from 114km to 200km

Revolutionising consumerism and the bank payment system.

Economic Impact



Environmental Impact “The Green Olympics”

- Pollution control

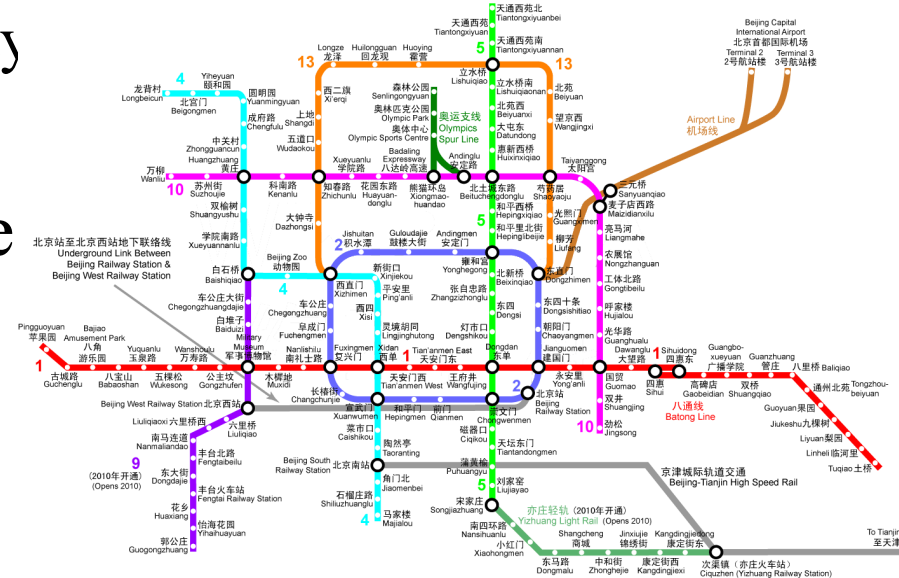
Beijing Coking Plant shut down

Shougang (Capital Steelworks) Group relocation

five northern provinces concentrate on their air cleanup efforts on highly concentrated metal and chemical plants

Ban the use of old vehicles in the city

- Traffic control
- Installing the Infrastructure
- Urban modernisation



The Olympic Green



Social and Cultural Impact

Humanistic Olympics

- National unit: the torch relay - 113 cities
- Chinese culture identity

“the world gives us 15 days and we gives it 5,000 years. It will show the world that Chinese culture cannot be westernised or replaced.” (Jin Yuanpu, Direcotr of the HOSC)

Olympic cultural festivals

Olympic education programmes

- Civility campaign:
spitting, smoking and queue jumping
smiling and speaking English

Political Impact

- New Media regulations

Foreign news media will be able to report freely on China. Journalists will be allowed to write about any aspect of China. More than 20,000 foreign journalists will descend China over the next 18 months.

- NPC delegates urged the top legislature to step up supervision of decision-making on major projects, starting from the preparation for the Olympics including the secretive budget.

The Politicization of the Beijing Olympics

- Since the beginning of the modern Olympic movement in the late 19th century, the Olympic Games has been used by politicians, religious groups, nationalists, extremists, NGOs, governments and alliances of states to launch their political activities.
- ‘All Olympic Games are, of course, highly politically charged and sensitive in some regions of the world. How could they not be?’

- John MacAloon

- The Chinese government hoped that the Games could strengthen national unity and facilitate cultural and economic exchanges in order to stimulate China's integration with the world. But the high visibility of the Games also exposed the country to political criticism the Beijing Games became one of the most politicized Games in Olympic history.

International Political Campaigns and Riots against the Beijing Games

- A international campaign to boycott the Beijing Games started when Mia Farrow, a Hollywood star, began to criticize China's supportive stance on Sudan's Islamic Government.



- At the same time, a powerful political campaign was launched by the exiled Tibetan government, the Free Tibet Campaign and the Tibetan Youth Congress. The purpose was to use the international visibility of the Beijing Olympics to increase the visibility of the Free Tibet Movement.

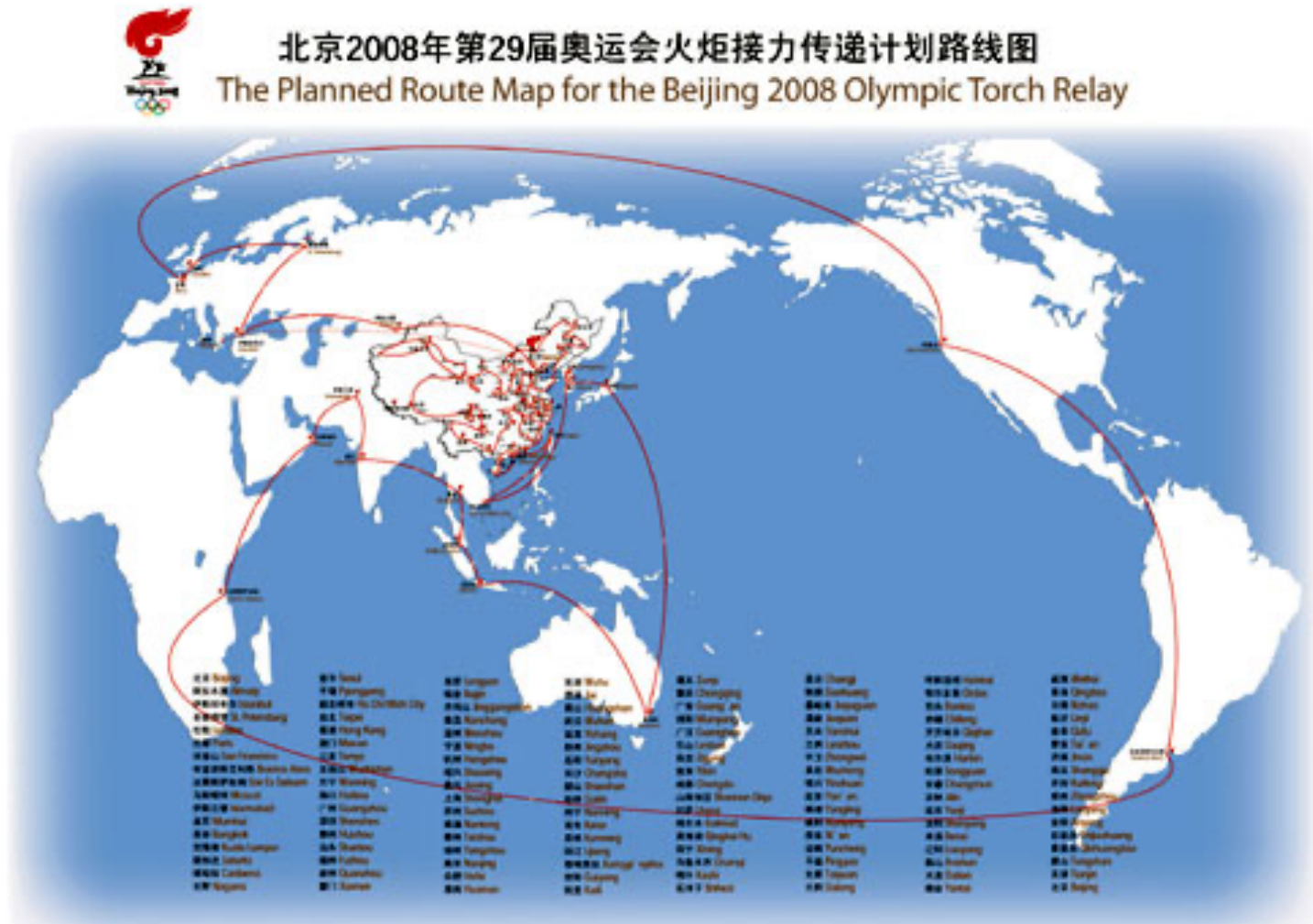


- Organizations like Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and The Committee to Protect Journalists, released reports denouncing China as failing to honour its Olympic obligations on human rights.



The Olympic Torch Relay - A Mirror of the World Politics

- The flame-lighting ceremony of the Olympic torch took place at Olympia on 24th March 2008.



In London and Paris



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjtRFyX1bmA>

In Buenos Aires, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta



In China



- For the Chinese people, the 2008 Olympics was a source of national pride. The Games was seen as an excellent opportunity for the Chinese to show the world a new China - open, prosperous and internationalised - and to help the Chinese people to demonstrate their 'can-do' spirit and cure their past sense of inferiority and thus become confident in themselves and their nation.

The Boycott Carrefour Campaign





Overseas Chinese in America launched an online protest against Cafferty and the CNN. A petition was created by the Legal Immigrant Association (LIA) to demand an official apology from the CNN
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbLSeveeZ5o>

- A few hours before the opening ceremony, a banquet was held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. More than 80 world leaders, royal family members, top IOC officials and their spouses attended.
- Japan's *Daily Yomiuri* noted: 'World leaders waited in line to shake hands with Chinese President Hu Jintao. This symbolized the rise of China as a leading economic and military power in the 21st century. This is a landmark in China's diplomatic history.'



Coda

- “Beijing has set the benchmark in preparations and their venues are amazing. What they have done so far is unprecedented”. – Brock-Doyle, LOBOG
- “The Games are on the radar of the global community and this brings challenges and opportunities, and the test is how these will be met” – Hein Verbruggen, Chairman, Co-ordination Commission of the IOC
- “Olympics would help democracy and the opening up of China” - Wen Jiabao, Chinese Prime Minister

Coda

“The Games are very important because I might have a chance to get a job. I am a nationalist and the games show we are becoming stronger and stronger. I think every Chinese person should think the same as I do. It is just not right if they don’t”. (Li Hongda, 50, male, unemployed)

“It is not only good for our country in general, but we the people also benefit from the Olympic Games. For example, my neighbourhood has changed dramatically. The streets have become cleaner and public transport has improved.” (Ma Lijuan, 45, female, doctor)

Conclusion

- The Beijing Olympic Games was one of the greatest—ever meetings of the East and West in human history.
- It was the celebration of the Chinese people and the vigorous and winning nation.
- The goal of the Beijing Games was to “fully express the common aspiration of the Chinese people to jointly seek peace, development and common progress together with the peoples of the world”.(BOCOG)
- Has the Beijing Games achieved the goal and strike a balance between showing China a global leader and defusing the fear of China to be a thread to the world?

London 2012

Medal count ›

					
Rank	Country	▼ Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	 United States of America	46	29	29	104
2	 People's Republic of China	38	27	23	88
3	 Great Britain	29	17	19	65

Elite Sport System Critique

- Debate: whether millions should be spent on the pursuit of Olympic medals or on improving people's physical exercise and health at grassroots level
- Athletes' education
- Retired athletes' unemployment and poor living conditions
- Reformation of sports system and structure
- Fitness-for-All Movement

Post-Beijing Policy and Strategy

- The continuation of the elite sport system
- Commercialization of Sport
- Mass Fitness

Olympic Movement: Multicultural?

- Beijing has embraced the Olympic culture with Chinese culture.
- Has the Olympic culture embrace Chinese culture?
- How to achieve the Olympic Movement as multicultural?