We are thrilled with the response to our first issue of the Commonwealth Times 2010. The positive feedback from our key partners has motivated us a great deal and we aim at bringing you all the news that’s keeping the Organising Committee Commonwealth Games 2010 Delhi (OC CWG Delhi 2010) Headquarters abuzz these days.

A must read in this issue is how the OC CWG Delhi 2010 has explored new mediums and successfully established its presence on the Internet through social media marketing: Facebook, Twitter, blogs etc.

It’s you, our delivery partners, who are helping us realise our dream of hosting a great and memorable Games. We would love to hear from you. Write to us at communications@cwgdelhi2010.org with your opinions, feedback and comments.

Happy reading!

Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, M.P.
Chairman,
Organising Committee
Commonwealth Games 2010 Delhi

High Commissioners of Commonwealth Nations Congregate at Games Headquarters

High Commissioners, Deputy High Commissioners and trade delegates from various Commonwealth nations congregated at the Organising Committee Commonwealth Games 2010 Delhi (OC CWG Delhi 2010) Headquarters on 5 July 2010 for an interaction with Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, M.P., Chairman, OC CWG Delhi 2010 and other senior members.

Representatives of the Commonwealth were assured that things were well on track to host athletes and officials from their nations, offering them an opportunity to stay and perform in world class facilities, and most importantly, in a safe and secure environment.

Mr. Kalmadi assured delegates that athletes were the centre of attention and everything going into the making of the Games had been designed with this in mind. He also stated that Delhi 2010 would be leveraged to help promote India’s economic potential and attract greater economic co-operation from the Commonwealth nations and territories.

“I seek your co-operation in helping Delhi

Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, Chairman, OC CWG Delhi 2010 and Mr. Lalit Bhanot, Secretary General, OC CWG Delhi 2010 with delegates at the OC CWG Delhi 2010 Headquarters
2010 be a resounding success,” he told the High Commissioners. “I look forward to your using your good offices to help us make this a memorable Games by ensuring that the best athletes represent your nations in the Games”.

He thanked the Commonwealth Games Associations for showing their enthusiasm by confirming the participation of a large number of athletes and officials. He made special mention of Australia, England and Wales, which are sending the largest ever contingent for the Games. Mr. Kalmadi said that all venues were world class and would be completed well in time.

Mr. Kalmadi said the OC CWG Delhi 2010 workforce would operate at the Talkatora Stadium during the Games. “Some have spent time at the venue during the Commonwealth Boxing Championship and have been visiting the Stadium on a regular basis during the planning phase. We have also identified 500 volunteers to be assigned to the stadium and they will undergo venue-specific training in the coming weeks,” he said.

“Talkatora Indoor Stadium will be a model venue for most integration activities of several Functional Areas (FAs) within the OC CWG Delhi 2010. The installation of technology, field of play equipment and overlays will all be done now. For example, close to 35 km of cables would be laid for a variety of purposes, including the Timing, Scoring and Results system which will include large video screens in the Stadium,” he said.

Queen’s Baton 2010
Delhi-States Urged to Put in Their Best

The OC CWG Delhi 2010 Headquarters is abuzz with activity these days. On 9 July 2010, Mr. Kalmadi chaired a meeting on the Queen’s Baton Relay 2010 Delhi national Route. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary, Government of Delhi, Mr. Rakesh Mehta, Mr. Randhir Singh, Vice Chairman, OC CWG Delhi 2010, Dr. Lalit Bhanot, Secretary General, OC CWG Delhi 2010, officers of various State Olympic Associations, Indian Olympic Association officials, MPs and some Arjuna awardees. The OC CWG Delhi 2010 has tied with the Armed Forces for support during the domestic leg of the Queen’s Baton 2010 Delhi.

Mr. Kalmadi said that it had been a great experience organising the international sector of the relay, and called on the state coordinators and nodal officers to make it a success in the domestic route as well.

A presentation on the national route was given by Gen. Kadyan, the Additional Director General of the Queen’s Baton Relay FA. He said that it was up to the states to decide the places that the relay would cover and asked for co-operation from the State Olympic Associations and state government officials. Later, questions from various officials were answered by the Queen’s Baton Relay team and the technicalities of the relay route were ironed out.

The baton’s 100 day journey will be twice as long as the national sectors for the Manchester 2002 and Melbourne 2006 Queen’s Baton Relays. The Queen’s Baton 2010 Delhi will travel to all 28 states of India, visiting every capital city, and will also go to its seven union territories covering more than 20,000 kilometres, reinforcing the theme of the Friendly Games by creating an all-inclusive relay.
R.K. Khanna Tennis Stadium Inaugurated

The R.K. Khanna Tennis Stadium, a refurbished state-of-the-art facility, was inaugurated on 11 July by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr. M.S. Gill.

The Stadium, which will host the Tennis competition during Delhi 2010, has a built-up area of 11,500 square kilometres and consists of 14 courts – one centre court, one show court, six match courts and six practice courts. The centre court can seat up to 5,200 spectators while the number one court has a 1000-seater gallery with additional facilities for ball kids, technical officials, athletes and broadcasters.

“IT will be an excellent venue for not only the coming Commonwealth Games but also for many more tournaments in future. I have no doubts that this stadium will measure up for the international standard,” Mr. Gill said on the occasion.

Rugby Stadium Inaugurated

The Delhi University Stadium, venue for the Rugby Sevens competition, was inaugurated on 15 July 2010 by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sport, Dr. M.S. Gill and Chief Minister of Delhi, Mrs. Sheila Dikshit. The swanky stadium at Delhi University is spread over an area of 10,000 square metres with a seating capacity of 10,000 (permanent and temporary) seats.

“This stadium is a gift to the Delhi University. The Games will be held in it, but this gift will remain with you forever. The work here started only in 2008 and I am happy that a sprawling complex has come up in just two years,” Mr. Gill said at the function. Mrs. Dikshit said it was an important day in the history of Delhi University and that such a facility would inspire students to participate in sports.

OC CWG Delhi 2010 Participates in ‘Times Future Arenas’ Seminar

The Times of India, in association with imagesbazaar.com, organised the ‘Times Future Arenas’ seminar at Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road on 9 July 2010. The seminar was held to discuss the forthcoming Commonwealth Games and how India could become a formidable sporting hub for world-class events. The event was divided into four sessions with different influencers and stakeholders of the Games as speakers. The first session which was also the major attraction of the event was attended by Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, Mrs. Sheila Dikshit, Chief Minister of Delhi, Mr. Abhijit Sarkar, Head, Corporate Communications, Sahara India Pariwar, Mr. S. Sridhar, CMD, Central Bank of India, Ms. Rina Ray, MD, Delhi Tourism and Ms. V K Karthika, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief, Harper Collins.

The speakers answered various questions asked by members of the audience. On one occasion Mr. Kalmadi said, “We are very confident of the preparations and everything is in place: the Games shall leave behind a great legacy which every Delhiite will cherish for the rest of their lives”. He also said, “The Commonwealth Games shall account for a very strong Olympic bid for India". Member of the press fraternity, corporates, NGOs and bureaucracy formed the audience. The event was also visited by Shera, the official mascot of Delhi 2010.

Delhi 2010 Promotions

Shera Visits Adarsh Public School

Members of OC CWG Delhi 2010, along with the affable mascot Shera visited the Adarsh Public School in Vikaspuri on Wednesday, 15 July 2010. The team was led by Mr. Mohan Phadke, Advisor, Ticketing FA and included members of the Ticketing and Communications FA.

The students were briefed about all details of Delhi 2010 being hosted by the capital city of New Delhi from 3-14 October 2010. Information regarding various venues and ticketing details was also shared. The event saw participation of students from schools like St Peter’s Convent and Rich Harvest Public School, apart from various branches of the host school.

The star of the show was Shera, who was a hit amongst the students.

Shera Raises Awareness for Kin

Shera, the mascot of Delhi 2010, attended a fundraising event at TGIF to generate awareness about India’s endangered national animal, the tiger. Sponsered by TGIF and Jim’s Jungle Retreat, a wildlife lodge at Corbett Tiger Reserve, the event raised funds for a new documentary titled, ‘The Return of the Tiger’, produced by film maker and conservationist Mr. Mike Pandey and Bollywood actor Mr. John Abraham. Mike Pandey’s commitment to the tiger’s cause, along with Shera’s playful presence and rapport with the event attendees, was a poignant reminder about the threat India’s wildlife continually faces from unregulated development.

“I believe that this is an important cause for the entire country,” Mr. Rohan Jetley of TGIF said, a point added to by Jim’s Jungle Retreat’s Mr. Daleep Akoi, who noted, “Spreading awareness reveals an amazing capacity in people who'd like to help and want to learn how to make a difference”.

Shera with Mr. Mike Pandey at TGIF for the fundraising event
RELAY REVIEW

Baton’s Journey Across Himalayas and Gangetic Plains

Since the Queen’s Baton 2010 Delhi arrived in India, it has been uniting the country with the message, ‘peace and harmony through sports’. After visiting the states of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, the baton has now completed its journey in the hill states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Bihar and the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The baton has also completed the first leg of its journey in Uttar Pradesh (North, Central and Eastern UP; the baton will visit the state again from 19 September 2010).

The relay got a remarkable response from the general public and the sports fraternity alike. Chandigarh witnessed a star-studded relay with legends like Milkha Singh (Athletics) and Kapil Dev (Cricket) participating in the relay along with Olympics gold medalist Abhinav Bindra (Shooting). Underlining the importance of sports in creating harmony between countries, ‘Flying Sikh’ Milkha Singh said, “These Games are a medium of spreading the message of peace and friendship across the world”.

In Himachal Pradesh, the baton promoted the Green Games vision. Plantation drives were the focal point of the relay in Himachal Pradesh. Saplings were planted along the relay route in Una, Dharamshala and Hamirpur. The David Dixon award winner of the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games, Samresh Jung, participated in the relay. The ace shooter expressed hope that Delhi 2010 would inspire youngsters to take parts in sports. “It’s a matter of immense pride for our country to host these Games. It will even inspire the kids to take part in sports. We also look forward to perform our best at the Games,” he said.

A boat ride in the Ganges was the highlight of the relay in Uttarakhand. The baton visited Haridwar, Srinagar, Dehradun and Nainital in the hill state. The baton then entered Uttar Pradesh through Baheri and later, moved to Lucknow via Bareilly. In Allahabad, the baton received tremendous response, and the crowd following resembled the famous Kumbh Mela, a once-in-twelve-years event that holds the world record for the biggest human congregation on the planet. In the historic city of Varanasi, the baton once again got a chance to ride on the waves of the river Ganges, lifeline to almost half a billion people.

In Bihar, the baton visited some historic places including Sher Shah Suri’s tomb in Sasaram and the Mahabodhi temple in Gaya, a UNESCO world heritage site. It was at this place, more the two and a half millennia ago, that Lord Buddha attained enlightenment. The baton then visited Bihar’s capital Patna amidst huge fanfare.

The baton is now on its way to the Seven Sister States of the North East via West Bengal and Sikkim.

Frequently Asked Questions

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TEST EVENTS

Seventh Asian Youth Netball Championship (3 to 10 July)

“Since we are hosting the Commonwealth Games and netball is a core event, it means it is a compulsory event for any Commonwealth Games. The Indian players have improved. I have great expectations of them because I have followed their progress. They have been playing a lot of exposure matches, thanks to the funding made available by the Prime Minister in a big package, which is the training of the Indian teams through the international sports division.”

- Gurbir Singh, President, Netball Federation of India

Invitational Squash Tournament (13 to 16 July)

“In Melbourne, I won a bronze medal. This time, I’m going there to win gold. The field in Delhi will be incredibly strong. Our preparations have been meticulous, but you can’t get ahead of yourself and we’ve got to make sure we do the simple things right.”

- Nick Matthew, top seed English squash player
Successful Roadshows Leverage Business Opportunities

Delegates from the Commonwealth Business Club of India (CBCI) conducted successful roadshows in the Commonwealth nations of Singapore (6 June) and Malaysia (11 June). Both were an astounding success and surpassed expectations.

After a series of presentations on the XIX Commonwealth Games 2010 Delhi and the CBCI, which came after 200 corporate and institutional bodies took part, followed by extended deliberations, the Singapore Business Federation proposed, and is set to structure a high-powered and enlarged business delegation of 30 to 40 delegates from the corporate world to attend Delhi 2010 business conclaves and a sports trade show in Delhi, scheduled from 5 to 13 October 2010, after witnessing the Opening Ceremony on 3 October 2010. Indeed, the presence of the Hon’ble Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Mr. Brahm Dutt, added to the efforts which began in November last year.

The CBCI’s presentations in Kuala Lumpur, attended by over 250 corporates, effectively prepared the ground as the Deputy Minister for Trade and International Affairs, Mr. Dato’ Jacob Sagan greatly emphasised the need for both Malaysia and India to open up new business vistas targeting an enhancement of bilateral trade including the sports industry and an interactive development in the area of sports. Neither was this a one-off journey. The CBCI’s efforts have gathered momentum with other delegations planned for 12 June in Malaysia.

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Delhi 2010 Riders Blog a Success

On 14 June 2010, 36 riders embarked on an expedition, covering the toughest terrain India has to offer. The Communications FA documented their journey on the Delhi 2010 Riders Blog. The blog was divided into 15 parts, covering the riders’ journey on a day-to-day basis.

From the beginning itself, the blog received a tremendous response. Over 15 days, we received 7000 visits in terms of traffic and 200+ comments. Here are some standout comments:

“Guys you are seriously making me feel so proud! It is so nice to see you guys spreading the word on Games… Have a safe and enjoyable ride now. God speed to the team, all the very best!”

“I wish all the riders of ML-2010 with Team456 a best of both the worlds. This is a very special journey as there is a great responsibility on each of the rider for CWG-2010, Delhi. Once again, a blissful and safe journey for each one of you.”

The Communications FA identified engaging subjects and started out by posting daily baton updates with pictures, addressed various queries about the Volunteer Programme and promptly published other stories about Delhi 2010. As per figures, the positive conversation increased by 65% in 3 months. By January 2010, we had a member base of 5,000+ fans on Facebook and 600+ followers on Twitter. Over the next few months, there was a drastic change in sentiment and 90% of the conversation was positive, and by May 2010, our database increased to 15,000 fans on Facebook and 1300+ followers on Twitter.

To maximise the effect and reach of the plan, the social media team collaborated with different functional areas and devised a series of contests to engage the online community members. We created a photo contest ‘For the love of Delhi’, specific Queens Baton Relay contests – ‘The QBR Slogan Contest’ and ‘Capture the baton contest’, the immensely popular Delhi United Contest ‘Shortcut to Volunteering’ and the ‘Delhi 2010 Riders Blog’. These activities helped in instilling a sense of pride among our members and earn public loyalty towards Delhi 2010.

Today, as of July 2010, we enjoy a healthy member base of 30,000+ fans on Facebook and 2,000+ followers on twitter from the world over, constantly engaged in constructive conversation about Delhi 2010 and spreading positive awareness about India’s biggest sporting event.
The Games have been in the news lately and for all the right reasons. In the past fortnight, many prominent national dailies have touched upon various aspects of the Games.

**Games: A Touch of Modernity**

*Statesman, 1 July*

The upcoming Commonwealth Games in Delhi would have a state-of-the-art communication facility for which comprehensive arrangements are being made, the Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology, Mr. Sachin Pilot said. He said MTNL and TCIL would work together to ensure smooth and high quality voice, data and video transmission.

**Delhi’s Darling**

*Economic Times, 1 July*

It’s one of those few Commonwealth Games-spurred projects that Delhiites will welcome: the new Terminal 3 at the Indira Gandhi International Airport. The US based architects HOK are no stranger to projects on a grand scale. With King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, Sendai International Airport in Japan in its list, HOK ranks among the top five airport design teams in the world.

**Cycling Velodrome Inaugurated**

*The Times of India, 2 July*

Completed in a record 17 months, a new international standard cycling velodrome at the Indira Gandhi Stadium was inaugurated early this week with Delhi chief minister Sheila Dikshit saying that the “job has been done elegantly and beautifully.”

**Formal Handover of Village on Aug 1**

*Political and Business Daily, 7 July*

“The Games Village is now being given final touches and will be handed over by the developer to the OC CWG Delhi 2010 by August 1,” Lt Governor Tejendra Khanna said after making an on-the-spot inspection of the progress of work.

**Huge Response from Citizens for Volunteering in CWG**

*The Pioneer, 1 July*

The members of the OC CWG Delhi 2010 are visibly enthused by the huge response they have got from the residents of Delhi and NCR who wanted to enrol as volunteers for the Games. “We did not have to go scouting for volunteers. They stand up in large number,” said Sudhir Mittal, SDG, Workforce, OC CWG Delhi 2010.

**Queen’s Baton Reaches Dharamsala**

*Tribune, 5 July*

The Queen’s Baton Relay entered Himachal from Mehatpur and reached Dharamsala in the evening. The baton was carried by international players from the local Sports Authorities of India stadium. It was carried to the international cricket stadium by boxer and Arjuna awardee Varinder Singh Thapa.

**Gill Inaugurates Tennis Venue for Delhi 2010**

*Statesman, 12 July*

Sports Minister Mr. M.S. Gill inaugurated the refurbished R. K. Khanna Stadium in the hope that Indian tennis players would shine here and rake in the medals when the capital hosts the Commonwealth Games in October.

**‘Games will be best in the world’**

*Hindu, 7 July*

The first interactive conference between representatives of countries participating in the upcoming Games in Delhi was held. It was presided over by Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, Chairman, OC CWG Delhi 2010. The arrangement and infrastructure he said, was comparable to anywhere else in the world. South Africa, UK, Malaysia, Mauritius, Australia, New Zealand and Zambia were among the nations represented at the conference.

**Delhi 2010 Merchandise to Go on Sale This Week**

*Asian Age, 15 July*

Premier Brands, a licensing and sponsorship major have bagged the exclusive merchandising contract for the Games. With less than 80 days to go, Games goodies are expected to go on sale by the end of this week.