

Commonwealth Games baton is 'soul of India'

By Paras Ramoutar

Port-of-Spain, Feb 26 (IANS) The 2010 Commonwealth Games baton now circulating throughout Trinidad and Tobago has been described as the "soul of India" by Indian High Commissioner Malay Mishra here. The baton for the Oct 3-14 Games in New Delhi will later tour other Caribbean countries who are members of the Commonwealth.

The envoy assured the media and the people of Trinidad and Tobago that "all facilities and other areas of the Games will be ready for the October 3 start".

Trinidad and Tobago is one of the 71 countries the baton will pass through in its 240-day trek before arriving in India July 1.

The Trinidad and Tobago contingent to the Games will have 150 members, Larry Romany, president of its Olympic Committee and Commonwealth Association, said. Hockey Board Public Relations Officer Arnold Knott will be chef de mission for the 2010 Games. "We expect to put forward a very good performance when we get to Delhi," he said.

John Hoskins, vice-president, Commonwealth Games Federation, said that the baton for this Games is much more elaborate than the last one. It includes a video camera, audio recorder, LED lighting systems which can be changed to suit colours of the flag of the country it is in, and can also receive SMS text message. The 1.9-kg, 66.4 cm baton also contains a GPS facility.

Special arrangements are being made for sports enthusiasts here to visit India for the Games.

This country's population is made of 44 percent of people of Indian origin whose forefathers came from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar between 1845 and 1917 to work on the sugar plantations.

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