

Australia satisfied with sports security in India

New Delhi, March 2 (IANS) Australia Tuesday said it was "satisfied" with Indian security arrangements for sporting events, including the ongoing Hockey World Cup tournament, the third edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) starting March 12 and the Commonwealth Games to be held here in October.

Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith, who is on a three-day trip to India, inspected the main stadium for the Oct 3-14 Commonwealth Games, which has been the target of threats by some militant groups.

"Australia is very pleased with the cooperation and coordination about security in the run-up to the Commonwealth Games," Smith told reporters after being shown around the progress of work at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, the main venue of the Commonwealth Games, in the capital.

"Of course, we have been very pleased with security arrangements both for the Hockey World Cup and also recently for the Commonwealth Federation shooting competition," Smith added.

Briefing reporters on Smith's visit, external affairs ministry spokesperson Vishnu Prakash said that Australia and India have been in close touch over the security for the games.

"Australian Hockey team is here. Australian players will be participating in the IPL matches and Australia has expressed satisfaction at the security arrangements," he said.

In a sign of confidence in Indian security for sporting events, Smith joined Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal Tuesday night to watch Australia and India play a Hockey World Cup game that the two sides have designated "Friendship Match".

The security for the Commonwealth Games will be among key issues for discussions between External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna and Smith here Wednesday. The talks are expected to be dominated by the safety and security of Indian students in Australia in the wake of attacks that started in May last year.

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