

MINISTERIAL VISIT TO INDIA, SIGNING OF MOU ON SPORTS COOPERATION

Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation

MR R.C. KUCERA (Yokine - Minister for Sport and Recreation) [12.11 pm]: Today I inform the House about the outcomes of the ministerial visit I undertook to India between 13 and 18 April this year. Mr Speaker, you will recall that on 8 April 2004 I informed the House of my intention to travel to India for the purpose of signing a memorandum of understanding on sports cooperation with the Government of the Republic of India. I signed the memorandum of understanding with J.P. Singh, Director General of the Sports Authority of India, in a nationally televised event held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Delhi on 15 April 2004. The signing of the memorandum forged an official agreement between Western Australia and India on areas of cooperation, including the training of athletes, the training of coaches and officials, sports science, and cooperation on infrastructure and the exchange of technology.

During my brief visit I was able to hold talks with the Indian Minister for Youth and Sport; the Delhi Minister for Education, Sport, Tourism and Culture; the Indian Olympic Association; and the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi and Head of the Delhi Development Authority.

The visit provided an opportunity to finalise the outline of a series of multidisciplinary workshops on sport to be conducted by Western Australian sports experts under the terms of the memorandum of understanding. The visit also provided an opportunity for me, in my capacity as Minister for Tourism, to promote Western Australia as a destination for Indian tourists. This involved my giving a multimedia presentation on the concept of holidays of a different nature, which showcased the tourist attractions and natural environment of Western Australia to about 70 Indian outbound tourist operators and journalists in Mumbai.

I am pleased to inform the House that as a direct result of my visit, a delegation of officials from the Delhi Development Authority have agreed to visit Perth in July to receive presentations from Western Australian construction companies on their preparations for the 2010 Commonwealth Games. By way of comment, I indicate that the Delhi Development Authority is currently building transport infrastructure that is similar to that which the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is undertaking in this State.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia has offered its services in arranging a round-table meeting with relevant representatives from local building and construction companies when the delegation arrives. This visit by the Delhi Development Authority will open the door for Western Australian companies to tender for the design and construction of sporting infrastructure and related utilities.

I would briefly like to thank the Director General of the Department of Sport and Recreation, Ron Alexander; Mr Hallam Pereira, who assisted with the delegation; and the team from the Department of Sport and Recreation. I also thank my staff officer, Mr Jai Wilson, for the arrangements that were made for this visit.

I seek leave to table the report on my ministerial visit to India.

[See paper No 2477.]