

**Speech of His Excellency Shri K.Sankaranarayanan, the Governor of Jharkhand on the occasion of Flag handing over taking over ceremony for the 34<sup>th</sup> National Games at Hotwar Ranchi on 12<sup>th</sup> October,2009**

Union Minister Shri Subodh Kant Sahai, Shri G.Krishnan, Shri Wilfred Lakra, & Shri T.P.Sinha, All Advisors, Shri R.K.Anand Working Chairman, NGOC, Shri SM Hashmi, Organising Secretary NGOC, Chief Secretary, Office bearers & members of Indian Olympic Association, Jharkhand Olympic Association, other Sports Associations, other dignitaries & the Sports loving people of Ranchi, ladies & gentlemen,

I am extremely happy to be with you on the occasion of the flag handing over taking over ceremony for the 34<sup>th</sup> National Games. As you all know, this ceremony is an integral and solemn part of the entire ceremonial preparation of the national games. This also is symbolic of the fact that now we are almost ready to host the games which are round the corner. It was in the year 2003 that the Indian Olympic Association allotted the National Games to the Jharkhand Olympic Association with the support of Government of Jharkhand in salutation to the natural sporting abilities of the youth of Jharkhand and in recognition of the love for games and sports amongst the people of Jharkhand.

While the games were originally scheduled to be held in 2005 itself, we all know that unforeseen events and circumstances led to several deferments. However, today we are at the doorstep of the games and the schedules are now fixed. I am happy to say that between 21<sup>st</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2009 a spectacular extravaganza of games and sports will be witnessed by the people of Jharkhand as well as millions in India and abroad through the electronic media.

We should be proud of the kind of infrastructure we have created here even if it took some time. This fantastic infrastructure includes several unique facilities, some of which are a first of its kind in the country. Of course all this has not happened overnight. Starting literally from ground zero we have gone on to erect some of the best stadia available in the country today which have the potential of becoming a true breeding ground for world class athletes and sportsmen.

Today the citizens of Jharkhand are ready to welcome nearly 12,000 participants and delegates to the 34<sup>th</sup> National Games scheduled to be held over a period of 15 days. It is going to be a very elaborate arrangement involving several thousand security forces, volunteers and various other functionaries who have to literally work round the clock to make the games one of the best sporting events ever held in this country. For this it is important that each and every resident of Jharkhand gives his whole hearted support to this massive effort that will test our organizational skills and stretch our resources and logistics. It is a challenge and an honour and I am sure we all will rise to the occasion.

It is a significant achievement for the 34<sup>th</sup> National Games Organizing Committee that for the first time the Flag of International Olympic Committee and Olympic Council of Asia will be hoisted at all the venues as a wonderful gesture by the IOC in recognition of the Commonwealth Games being held in 2010 at Delhi. We must remember that the International Olympic Committee, the Commonwealth Games Federation and Olympic Council of Asia have taken this National Games as a field trial of sorts ahead of the Commonwealth Games, Delhi. This is all the more reason that we must work overtime to organize a flawless and spectacular games.

I am very sure Jharkhand as a state with overflowing sporting talent will also put up a remarkable show in all the competitions and

that its athletes will bring glory to the state by their performances and by their sportsmanship. The true test of our commitment to sporting excellence will, however, begin after the games are over in the manner we use this world class infrastructure to produce future world class athletes. Let us all wish and strive towards that long-term goal.

Once again I congratulate all the citizens of Jharkhand for being the proud hosts of what promises to be a fantastic fifteen days dedicated to extraordinary athletic prowess and the Olympian desire in all of us to be faster, go higher and to be stronger. I extend my best wishes to the 34<sup>th</sup> National Games Organizing Committee and look forward to a historic 34<sup>th</sup> National Games in Jharkhand.