

Report on Elite Sports Committee's Visit to Guangzhou

Date: 14 January 2005 (Friday)

Objective: To familiarise with the provision of elite training facilities and services in Guangzhou and provide an opportunity for exchange of experience

Places visited: Guangdong Olympic Centre
Guangdong Institute of Sport

Participants:

Elite Sports Committee

1. Mr Victor Hui Chun-fui, Chairman
2. Professor Frank Fu Hoo-kin, Vice Chairman
3. Professor Bruce Abernethy
4. Mr Chan Chi-choi
5. Mr Cheung Wai-leung
6. Ms Fay Ho Kim-fai
7. Mr Kwok Ka-ming
8. Professor Lau Wai-shing
9. Mr Roger Luk Koon-hoo
10. Mr Shen Jin-kang
11. Professor John Spinks
12. Mr Tsin Yan-pui
13. Miss Maggie Chow (Secretary)

Government Officials

14. Mr Daniel Sin, HAB
15. Mr Wells Ho, HAB
16. Mr Chan Kin-wa, HAB
17. Miss Katharine Chan, HAB
18. Mr Joe Cheng, LCSD

Itinerary

- 08:00 Arrive at waiting area, Intercity Through Train, Hung Hom Station
- 08:25 Depart for Guangzhou East Railway Station (Intercity Through Train T826)
- 10:07 Arrive at Guangzhou East Railway Station
- 10:30 Depart for Guangdong Olympic Centre for visit
- 12:00 End of visit
- 12:30 Lunch at Peninsula Chinese Restaurant, Er Sa Dao
- 14:30 – 17:00
Visit Guangdong Institute of Sport, Er Sa Dao
- Visit facilities and attend athlete's training sessions
 - Discussion and exchange
- 17:15 Depart for Guangzhou East Railway Station
- 18:20 Depart for Hung Hom Station (Intercity Through Train T823)
- 20:07 Arrive at Hung Hom Station

I. Visit to Guangdong Olympic Centre

The one-hour tour was led by Mr Chiang Xiaowui, Director of Administration Office of the Centre. Located at Tongpu of Tianhe District, Guangzhou, the Centre features a state-of-the-art stadium which was built for the IX National Games in 2001. With a capacity of 80,800 seats, it will also be used as the main stadium for the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou.



2010 Asian Games bid posters



Members at the Guangdong Olympic Stadium

Construction work of the multi-purpose stadium started in 1998 and completed in August 2001, with a cost of RMB1.2 billion. The modern facility is equipped with a standard soccer pitch, a 400m running track, a large display screen, a media centre, VIP boxes, function rooms and a three-star hotel. According to Chiang, the Stadium will undergo renovation work as the 2010 Games approaches.

During this period, the Stadium also opens to major sporting events held in Guangzhou, for instance, Real Madrid Football Club played against China National team at the Stadium in 2004. Members are generally impressed by the modern structure and facilities of the Stadium and look forward to it as the main stadium for the Asian Games 2010.



VIP rooms





Guangdong Olympic Stadium



II. Visit to Guangdong Institute of Sport

After visiting the Olympic Centre, the Guangdong Sports Administration hosted an official lunch for the delegation in an Er Sa Dao Chinese restaurant. Members were then invited to the adjacent Guangdong Institute of Sport (GIS) for a presentation on the work of the GIS, followed by a discussion session and a visit to various facilities of the Institute.

1. History and set-up of GIS

The Institute was opened by the then State Sports Commission in **1954** under the name “Er Sa Sport Training Centre” for the national squad in preparation of the Melbourne Olympics. In 1972, its name was changed to “Guangdong Provincial Sports Team” and became a training base for the Guangdong team. The Centre was renamed the **Guangdong Institute of Sport in 1993**.



Disciplines and organisation chart of GIS

Located in Er Sa Dao, Guangzhou, the Institute occupies an area of 220,000 square metres with more than **60 indoor and outdoor training facilities**. Currently the GIS oversees **18 disciplines**, including athletics, badminton, basketball, diving, fencing, gymnastics (artistic, rhythmic, trampoline), table tennis, tennis, women's football, swimming, volleyball, water polo, synchronised swimming, weightlifting, wushu, and chess. They also run a **satellite training base** in Wuidong, Guangdong. The Institute is led by a Communist Party Chief and a Director, with seven departments responsible for the daily operations. (Diagram above)

The 18 disciplines contain around **800 athletes**, who are being trained under a group of **150 coaches** (20 are national team level, 30 are senior coach level and 100 of other levels). With the support of another 100 management staff, the total establishment of the GIS is around **1,050**. Unlike the system in Hong Kong, the athletes are also part of the establishment and receive monthly salary.

Their target is very clear – to win medals at the National Games and Olympic Games.



Slogans on preparation for the winter training stint

2. Resource allocation

Annual subvention from the Guangdong Provincial Government to the Guangdong Sports Administration reaches about **RMB400 million**. Of the amount, **RMB100 million** goes to the GIS.

Within the GIS, different amount of funding is allocated to each of the 18 disciplines, based on its **number of athletes** which varies among different disciplines. The Director cited an example of rowing on how to decide its squad size. A total of 56 rowers are required to fill up all events in rowing. The Director will then examine the resource he has got in hand, the performance of individual events and the number of athletes in the feeder system before he decides the final squad size in consultation with the rowing coaches.

Each athlete receives a monthly income once he has admitted to the Institute. The amount is paid in accordance with his level of achievement. A newcomer with little success will receive about **RMB 2,000 per month** which, according to the Director, is better than all other sports institutes across Mainland and above the average income of a Guangzhou citizen.

Apart from the allocation in accordance with the number of athletes, the 18 disciplines also receive funding under another budget item known as “**Specific Budget**”. The total amount reaches **RMB15 million**. It covers expenditure on sports science, sports medicine, overseas and other province training, etc. The allocation is based on medal expectations of individual sports at the National Games, including number of athletes to win the expected number of medals, requirements of individual disciplines such as equipment, training needs.

3. Selection of disciplines/athletes

The 18 disciplines do not need to compete against others in order to get the support of the GIS. The Director said all **29 sports** under the **National Games** are supported by the Provincial Government. There are **5 training bases across Guangdong** and individual sports such as cycling, boxing, shooting, archery, windsurfing are based in other centres. The GIS is the largest among the 5 centres with 18 disciplines from 16 sports. The total athlete establishment of Guangdong reaches **1,560**.

Athletes at the GIS are selected from the **96 amateur sports schools** across the 21 districts in the province. Each district runs its own sports schools or institutes and supplies its best athletes to the GIS for further training.

Athletes of district level normally train three hours a day and spend the rest of the time on studies. In Guangdong, there are about **26,000 athletes** in amateur sports schools and sports institutes.

The GIS then select its best and send them to the national team. The Director cited an example that 13 gymnasts, 17 fencers, and 6 divers from the GIS are now with the national squad.

With the recent introduction of **club system in professional football and basketball leagues** in China, the traditional system of athletes' promotion from "district → GIS → national team" has been upset. As all professional teams are club based, the GIS and other institutes in the country cannot set up their own teams to take part in the league. What they are doing is to work with the professional clubs for the training and development of a feeder system and supply the best and promising juniors to play for the club in the league. If they are good enough, they will then be selected into the national squad and this process has nothing to do with the GIS.



Members at discussion with GIS officials

4. Education and career support

In the past, the Government looked after all athletes' career after retirement from competitive sports. However, after the introduction of market economy in China, especially in Guangdong, the GIS faces also the problem of arranging jobs to all its retired athletes. At one time, they have had 200 athletes who could not get a job referral after retirement.

Last year, the provincial government decided that all major games **gold medallists** (National Games, Asian and Olympic Games) **would be provided jobs** after retirement. Those less succeeded would not enjoy such a privilege, however and have to rely on the Institute's human resources department to work out plans with the public and commercial sectors for job opportunities after retirement. For example, they have recently been approached by the Public Security Bureau of Guangzhou for supplying athletes to fill up certain posts and this system also works very well with other public or private bodies.

The GIS pays also heavy attention on education support. About 40 athletes are now studying in tertiary institutions in Guangzhou. The Institute has worked out with the tertiary institutions a **flexible credit system** to allow athletes train, compete and study at the same time without too much hindrance. At the moment, some tertiary institutions provide instructors to teach at the Institute so that athletes do not need to spend time on travelling, while athletes have to go to the institution to attend classes for those that do not provide such service.

5. Conclusion

On behalf of the Elite Sports Committee, the Chairman thanked the Guangdong Sports Administration and Guangdong Institute of Sport for the warm reception and detailed briefing. He said the aim of the visit was to learn from the experience of our Guangdong counterparts on operations of an elite training centre and its successful ways in producing medallists. He was delighted that a lot of insights had been offered on the two areas which he believed would benefit Hong Kong. He also looked forward to continued exchange and close communications with the Guangdong sports authorities in future in order to help foster high performance sports in Hong Kong.



Chairman (right) thanks Mr Zhao Shaoming, Party Chief of GIS



Members and officials from the GIS

6. Visit of facilities



At the diving centre - diving is one of the top sports at the GIS



Stars of the future



A group of young synchronised swimmers in practice



Visit to the badminton courts



Weightlifting Room



Members examining the running track

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