

Fourth Military World Games hosted by India

CISM

Mumbai, India

The grand finale showcasing a blend of tradition and modernity marked the conclusion of the week-long sporting extravaganza - the Fourth CISM Military World Games in Hyderabad, India on October 21, 2007. The Defence Minister of India, Shri A K Antony declared the Games closed at the GMC Balayogi stadium. The closing ceremony was a four-hour long celebration adding to the festive mood of Vijayadashami, the Dussehra. Thousands of spectators filled the stadium to join the celebrations of the Games in which nearly 5000 athletes from 101 countries participated.

This was the biggest International multi-sport event of the year, the motto of which was Friendship Through Sport. Russia emerged on top of the medal tally with 42 gold, 26 silver and 28 bronze medals. China, second with 36 gold, 22 silver and 13 bronze while Germany came a distant third with 7 gold, 10 silver and 13 bronze.

The CF sent 175 athletes, coaches and support staff to India for the games. Louis DeSouza, Canadian Forces Halifax Personnel Support Programs (PSP) sports coordinator, was team manager for the Canadian triathlon team. Jason Price, PSP Halifax sports coordinator at Shearwater, was athletic therapist with the triathlon team.

Although Canada did not win any medals in the Games overall, three world records and 27 CISM records were either set or overhauled. Of these 17 were set alone by women athletes. A record 49 countries won medals during the competitions,



LS Kharim Schliewinsky, based at Fleet Diving Unit (Atlantic) in Halifax has a steady pace as he competes in the triathlon race.

the highest ever in any edition of the games.

"The fourth Military World Games provide a world stage for our elite Canadian Forces athletes and are an excellent way to enhance morale within the Canadian Forces," said BGen D.E. Martin, CEO Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency and Canadian Forces Chief of Delegation in India. "Our core military values are represented daily during this eight day event. The fourth Military world Games provide our Canadian Forces with the

privilege to compete and also to connect with the many member nations of the conseil international du sport militaire."

At the grand finale Indian Armed Forces Bands played tunes to signal the march past by the competitors from participating countries. One after another, the countries followed in their military uniforms waving to the cheering spectators.

Defence Minister A K Antony congratulated the Indian Armed Forces for the successful conduct of the games and said that these games

would usher in new era not only in the Indian subcontinent but also throughout Asia. CISM President Brigadier General Gianni Gola in an emotionally charged speech said that Military World Games have been a stupendous success. "This was the first games outside Europe and that happens to be the best ever in India. Seldom has any country been successful in conducting such a wonderful organization of the games," he said. Being an Italian himself, CISM President told the audience that Bravo the mascot of

the games, in Italian meant Well Done. "A message of peace has been sent from Hyderabad to the entire world on this occasion", he said. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Shri YSR Reddy expressed satisfaction at the successful completion of the Games and said that Hyderabad was ready to host any international events in the future including the Olympics.

After lowering the CISM Flag, the torch was handed over by Chief of Indian Delegation Major General VK Ahluwalia to Brigadier General Luis Antonio Pinto Machado, Chief of Brazilian delegation, host of the next Games. The flame of the Game was extinguished in a poignant ceremony.

A 10-minute video flashback of the The Week that Was capturing the essence of the Games was screened at the stadium.

Pop singer Raageshwari set the mood of the evening by showcasing the musical world of Indian films. Bollywood actress Isha Sherwani also cast a spell on the audience with her contemporary dance that was a mix of physical balancing act with martial arts. Then samba dancers from Brazil took over bringing alive the beat and rhythm of Brazil. Replicating the streets of Rio, these dancers nearly set the stadium on fire with their enthusiasm and rhythm, and treated the audience to a glimpse of what is to come at the next Military World Games.

A brilliant display of fireworks finally brought the curtains down on the eventful Games that brought together nations and their soldiers in an unheralded spirit of camaraderie even as the city of Hyderabad bade farewell to the military athletes.

SGT JOANNE CLOWE, CANADIAN FORCES COMMUNITARIAN