

Macao 2005, 4th East Asian Games

The Macao 2005, 4th East Asian Games will be held from Saturday, 29 October 2005 to Sunday, 6 November 2005. An estimated 6,000 people, including participating athletes, technical officials, coaches, leaders, VIPs, celebrities, members of the Olympic Family and representatives from the media are expected to gather in Macao to take part in this innovative quadrennial regional event.

It is in this unprecedented sports reunion that the agility, perseverance and determination of the participating athletes can be heartfelt. Besides, the Games also present a series of "top of the world sports competitions" which goes beyond country borders and promotes communications. Macao will turn into an evolving city and a hub of large scale sports activities with interest in development of tourism and promotion of citizen culture. Thanks to the upcoming edition of East Asian Games, a source of energy will be generated in the East Asian region to create a new era and open a path of prosperity for the world.

At the 3rd Coordination Meeting of the East Asian National Olympic Committees (EANOC) held in Shanghai, China on 27 January 1992, the Coordination Committee of the East Asian Games Association (EAGA) was officially established with members including the People's Republic of China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Hong Kong, China; Japan; Korea; Macao, China; Mongolia; Chinese Taipei and Guam (associate member).

As regulated by Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), the general objectives of the Association are to promote the Olympic Movement and to coordinate and promote the sports exchange and cooperation in the East Asian region.

Shanghai, China hosted the first edition of the Games from 9 to 18 May 1993; Busan, Korea the second edition from 10 to 19 May 1997 and Osaka, Japan the third edition from 19 to 27 May 2001.

It was at the 11th EAGA Council Meeting held in Guam in March 1996 that Macao was awarded the right and honor to host the 4th East Asian Games.

Since the establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) on 20 December 1999, the Government has demonstrated its full support towards this regional event through its dedicated policies and actions to ensure the successful organization of the 4th East Asian Games. Based on a comprehensive study on existing facilities and the major needs of the SAR, a general plan on sports infrastructure was developed in 2000.

While the development of sport tourism is one of the SAR Government's objectives, a significant level of resources is allocated on sports events including the 4th East Asian Games, the 1st Lusofonia Games and the 2nd Asian Indoor Games. The investment of the Government brought about an increase in Macao's GDP per capita by over 15%. From the very beginning of its development, Macao has always focused its attention on the policy of developing training centre and international conferences. Only through actively working towards international standard, can Macao depreciate its investments and organize major activities in addition to the 4th East Asian Games. In other words, it is necessary to actively develop seminars, conferences and exhibitions in Macao and create all necessary conditions to make up inadequacies in the areas of sport, culture, education and parking facilities.

The many preparatory works of the 4th East Asian Games began in earnest following the official establishment of the Macao 2005 East Asian Games Coordination Office in July 2000. On 1 January 2002, the Coordination Office was replaced by the Macao 4th East Asian Games Organising Committee, Ltd. (MEAGOC) to continue the important mission to conceive, plan, prepare, promote and organise a successful East Asian Games.

A diversity of 17 popular sports are included in the 4th East Asian Games, namely athletics, dragonboat, basketball, bowling, dancesport, football, gymnastics, weightlifting, hockey, karate-do, aquatics, rowing, soft tennis, taewondo, tennis, shooting and wushu. 734 medals will be awarded in 235 events. Among the sports, 11 are Olympic sports, 4 are team sports, 5 are ball sports, 3 are combating sports and 2 are water sports. 16 of the sports have both men's and women's events.

Riding of the momentum of the 4th East Asian Games, Macao is playing an important role as a starting point of large scale sports events and sport tourism, in a bid to retain international attention on Asia, develop outstanding sport tourism and become an important player in the international sports community.

As described in the Olympic Movement, sports activities promote health. However, very often, many of the other positive features are forgotten. Sport activities facilitate personnel training, create jobs, sustain economic development, prevent violence and promote peace. Moreover, sport activities encourage team spirit and leadership, support acceptance of failure and recognition that there is no eternal victory, as well as cultivate important ideas like discipline and perseverance.