

Rural Extravaganza Kicks off Amidst Fanfare

Union Minister Dr T Subbarami Reddy and State Minister Shabbir Ali Mohd launch CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games 2007

- CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games to cover 32 centers in three states this year, including Karnataka and Maharashtra
- Subbarami Reddy offers complete help from the central government to the Rural Games
- Games Torch lit by Olympian Mulini Reddy
- Various government agencies to impart skills and provide information to villagers
- Free Health Camps and Eye Test Camps to be conducted for the benefit of participants

Hyderabad, 28th April, 2007: Amidst thunderous applause by hundreds of farmers, dignitaries and school children who gathered from different parts of the state, the CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games 2007 got off to a colourful start at the L.B Stadium here today.

Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy, Union Minister of State for Mines, and Shri Shabbir Ali Mohd, State Minister for Energy, Coal, Minorities Welfare, Wakf & Urudu Academies, accompanied by AICC member Gudur Narayana Reddy, inaugurated the CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games 2007 by lighting the traditional lamp.

Smt. Mulini Reddy, veteran Olympian and Arjuna Awardee, Sri. L. Rajagopal, President, Andhra Pradesh Olympic Association and Sri. Atul Singh, President, Coca-Cola India, lit the symbolic torch of CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games 2007 and handed it over to Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy.

Speaking on the occasion Dr Subbarami Reddy said, "the Rural Games is a great initiative and the credit goes to the Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages and Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations (CIFA). Demonstrating its commitment to the communities it operates, Coca-Cola India has been organizing various programmes as part of its social responsibility programme and the Rural Games is going to go places with the Games moving to two more states from this year."

Shri Shabbir Ali Mohd said, "the CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games are going to have major impact on the rural communities as it grows bigger and bigger. Coca-Cola's efforts will be paid by the rural people by supporting the company in all respects,"

Emphasizing the need for recognizing the rural vigor and channelizing the energies of youth towards constructive activities, Sri P. Chengal Reddy, Secretary General, Consortium of Indian Farmers Association (CIFA) said "we are delighted that the small steps we took alongwith Coca-Cola last year are beginning to create enthusiasm amongst the villagers across the State and look forward to have more similar experiences together in the years to come."

Reaffirming the company's commitment towards communities around the country, Atul Singh said, "the first edition of CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games met with great success and that encouraged us to stage this event in more states."

He added, "I also wish to thank the Government of Andhra Pradesh for its invaluable support in helping to create unique public-private partnerships that will ensure that a range of services, ranging from skills development to knowledge enhancement, are extended to the villagers".

The second edition of CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games will now move to 19 venues in 14 districts over the next 40 days where rural folk will vie for honours in a variety of traditional sporting activities and games such as sack-carrying race, kabbadi, tug-of-war etc. The winners of the first leg of contests at the district level will challenge each other at the state level grand finale scheduled for the first week of June.

The CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games will move on to cover six centres each in Karnataka and Maharashtra after the conclusion of the Andhra Pradesh.

To mark the occasion, an on-the-spot drawing contest was conducted at the venue. It received an overwhelming response from hundreds of budding artists who lent expression to their sentiments reinforcing the spirit of the CIFA-Thums Up Rural Games. The winners were decided by a jury comprising eminent artist Asha Radhika and Dr Suresh, president of the Osmania Medical College Doctors Association.

About Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations

Consortium of Indian Farmers Association (CIFA) is a Non-Governmental organization working for the development of the farmers and agricultural sector to increase its share in the national economy and also to utilize the global opportunities. CIFA is also working to create awareness amongst farmers on various Government of India incentives and encourage participation of private Indian industries in rural development. CIFA is also involved in various social welfare activities to improve the quality of lives of the rural people, conducting sports events, creating awareness on AIDS, blood donation, importance of education of girl children, de-addiction campaign for alcoholism, creating awareness of donation of human organ etc., amongst farmers and rural villagers

About Coca-Cola

The Coca-Cola Company believes that the business should bring benefit and refreshment to communities wherever it operates, and in line with this belief the Company provides extensive support for community programs across the country, with a focus on Education, Health, Environment Enhancement and Community Support by tying up with local NGOs. Those projects have benefited several schools, thousands of students and other communities near and around Coca-Cola bottling plants in Andhra Pradesh. The Company has been actively promoting and supporting various projects that bring benefit to local communities and some of the recent initiatives include construction of check dams, setting up of rainwater harvesting projects, grant of

scholarships to students across the entire State and provision of free health camps. Some of these efforts were also recognized by the Andhra Pradesh Government which bestowed the Best Management Award to the Company in the year 2005.

For further information on company's Indian operations and its products please visit www.coca-colaindia.com

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