

## Unique baton relay to start Commonwealth Youth Games

The Commonwealth Youth Games (CYG) to be held here this October will be preceded by a unique baton relay, during which water from all participating countries and all states through which the relay passes will be carried in a chamber of a specially-designed baton.

The water will be used to start a fountain at the opening ceremony of the games. The relay will reach here Oct 12.

Purnima Pendse, the director of culture and ceremonies at CYG, told IANS: 'The sample of water, which the baton will carry, will be used to create a spectacular fountain at the opening ceremony of the games.'

The fountain will be placed in the 'garden of youth' to be created by planting saplings from 71 participating nations.

According to Pendse, it will be a legacy for the city. The fountain will keep sprinkling water all through the Oct 12-18 games, she said.

The baton, made by Pune-based Elephant Designs, is also unique. Pendse said: 'The baton is nice and sleek, the curved shape is symbolic of the suppleness of an athlete, while the sleek design showcases to the world Pune's modernity and progress in various fields like IT.'

The baton will also sport a copper leaf on top symbolising green games.

At the Army Sports Institute here, 7,500 volunteers have been given special training to escort the baton; 6,000 Indian and international athletes will carry the baton through 199 cities in nine states travelling by land and water and covering a distance of 8,000 km.

According to CYG organising committee chairman Suresh Kalmadi, this is the first ever baton relay in the history of the Commonwealth Youth Games.

The relay will travel along with a special green vehicle that will collect garbage on its way and hand it over to the municipal authorities for disposal.

Hundreds of universities, colleges and schools will be involved and will support this event. A team consisting of 80 crew members, 25 vehicles and many guests besides media persons and VIPs will escort the baton on its journey from Delhi to Pune.

The baton relay will be a run in support of the government's 'save the tiger' campaign. Promotional caps, T-shirts, flags and stickers will be distributed to schoolchildren and the public as the relay proceeds.

There will be a provision of a mobile stage and screen unit for entertainment at every night stop to supplement all the cultural programmes that the states plan.

A vehicle carrying the Youth Games Mascot Jigrr will move immediately ahead of the baton convoy, handing out promotional material, playing the theme tune and announcing the arrival of the baton to

the crowds.

A major event, in addition to the launch in Delhi, is a 12 km swim carrying the baton across the channel from the Gateway of India in [Mumbai](#) to Uran, near Mumbai. After nearly 70 days, the baton will arrive in Pune where the host city will have three days of events and ceremonies.

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