

# Games'n'gifts

Special merchandise to celebrate the Commonwealth Youth Games is getting more fans every day. PT reports 25.09.08

GAURAV THAKUR Times News Network

AS the Commonwealth Youth Games (CYG) fever grips the city, the merchandise of the Games is flying off the shelves with people wanting to own a piece of history. It includes T-shirts, Jigrr toys, mouse pads, pen drives, kids poncho, coffee mugs, sports metal bottles, Jigrr magnets, keychains, etc. "The merchandise of the CYG is doing well and it's nice to see the support of people in Pune for the Games," says Suresh Kalmadi, chairman of the organising committee, CYG. Authorities in the CYG inform that the merchandise is not very elaborate. "We have deliberately kept it short and sweet," says Sangeeta Welinkar, co-ordinator of the CYG.

A lot of planning has gone into the designing of the merchandise. Says CYG apparel designer Nivedita Saboo, "We did a survey in stores about various fashions and trends and

colours in vogue, and accordingly the designs have been done," she says. The very idea of having merchandise is to make the Games popular among the people and also to give them a set of memorabilia. The merchandise prices have been kept low so that more and more people can own the them. "In some of the earlier Games, we saw that merchandise was priced very high which discouraged people from buying stuff," says Welinkar.

What gives the merchandise a local feel is the special 'I Love Pune' collection. "This is specially for people in Pune who would like to keep this collection. Various goods, right from coffee mugs to T-shirts, sport this one-liner," says Sweety Patel, project officer, merchandising. "There are both trendy and sober T-shirts for people to buy as they want," adds Patel.

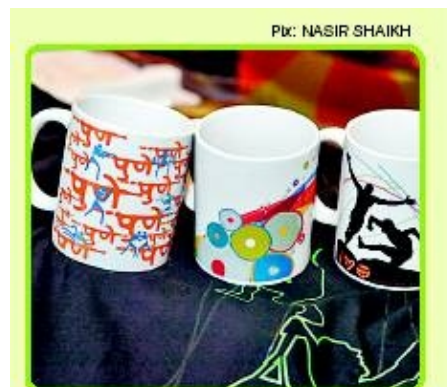
Rochana Deb from the Elephant Design Studios points out that the entire merchandise has been prepared in sync with the theme and look of the Games. "We have tried using vibrant and popular colours to give it a youthful look," she says.

Most of the merchandise has been made in India to give it a national flavour. "A little bit of it like the soft toy of Jigrr has been imported from China which anyway is cheap," says Welinkar. Another interesting aspect of the CYG merchandising is the corporate programme. Corporates can tie up with CYG for cobranding and make merchandise which has logos of both the CYG and their respective company.

Customised merchandise has been prepared for schools and colleges as well.

The CYG merchandising is available in select locations, including the CYG office. So, do you own a piece of the Games?

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SHOPPING FOR HISTORY: CYG merchandie has created a stir in city shopping centres, and Puneites are making a beeline for it