



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION ISLAMABAD

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Press Release

THE GOLD COAST AUSTRALIA 2018 QUEEN'S BATON RELAY OF THE XXI COMMONWEALTH GAMES TO VISIT PAKISTAN

The Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Margaret Adamson today hosted a reception to mark the imminent arrival in Pakistan of the Queen's Baton Relay of the XXI Commonwealth Games which will be held on the Gold Coast, Australia from 4 to 15 April 2018.

The Gold Coast 2018 Queen's Baton Relay arrives in Lahore on 29 September, marking the 200th day of the 388-day expedition across Commonwealth countries. Pakistan is the first stop for the baton in its visit to South Asia. The Gold Coast 2018 Queen's Baton Relay is set to be the longest in Commonwealth Games history, covering 230,000km through 71 countries.

As part of the celebrations, the Australian High Commission will support a visit to the Gold Coast by two Pakistani school students to participate in a cultural orientation program with Gold Coast schools and other school students from Commonwealth countries during the Games.

High Commissioner Adamson welcomed the 2018 Gold Coast Queen's Baton Relay to Pakistan and highlighted the Australian Government's support for sports development across Commonwealth countries including Pakistan.

"The visit of the Queen's Baton Relay is an opportunity to celebrate the dedication and sacrifice of Pakistani sports women and men – past and present – who are great ambassadors for Pakistan," Ms Adamson said.

"Australia is pleased to support a visit to the Gold Coast of a girl and boy from Pakistan as 'student ambassadors' to participate in a cultural orientation program involving students from the Gold Coast and other Commonwealth Countries during the XXI Commonwealth Games."

The Australian Government is supporting a number of sports development activities in Pakistan including the training of more than 600 young Pakistanis in squash skills and the promotion of health and gender equality; and the annual Australian High Commission and Pakistan Cricket Board School Girls' Cup cricket tournament and skills development clinics which aim to empower girls through cricket. More broadly, the Australian Government's development program is contributing to improved nutritional outcomes for children across Pakistan, which is fundamental to a child's survival and potential athletic performance.

The Commonwealth Games Association of Pakistan is hosting a number of sports and cultural activities around the visit of the Queen's Baton Relay from 29 September to 3 October. The student representatives to visit the Gold Coast will be selected from The City School.

Note only for journalists and editors: For more information, please contact: +92 (0) 51 8355500 at media.islm@dfat.gov.au