

## Games: Water is the theme

FROM PAGE 1

the form of a great 16th Asian Games, the biggest sports event in Asia," said Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, president of the OCA during the opening ceremony that cost 380 million yuan (\$57 million)

"Once again, we are about to witness Asia's best athletes battle it out over 16 days of intense competition while displaying sportsmanship and serving as ambassadors for Asia," he said before Premier Wen Jiabao declared the games open.

Compared with the metal drums and the representation of ancient printing machines at the Beijing Olympics' opening ceremony, which was directed by China's world-renowned movie director Zhang Yimou, Guangzhou's celebration was more about the soft elements that surround local people in their daily lives.

From the very beginning, the one-hour performance made full use of water, which is considered to have bred the unique culture of the people of the Lingnan — the name of the geographic area of southern China.

The drop of water at the beginning became a fountain, rain, a swimming and diving pool, a river and the sea during the performance.

The palm leaf and kapok flower, products of two common local plants, also spoke of the local people's love of nature.

Performers with lanterns representing 200 fishing women and brave sailors reminded the audience of the city's connection to the sea that has fought with and worked with over the centuries to make its living.

In front of eight sail-shaped hanging LED screens — the world's largest — 180 performers presented a four-dimensional show in the air with 1,320 operators on the ground.

Forty-five holy water girls put water collected from all of the countries and regions into a basin, symbolizing the vision of the Guangzhou games — Thrilling Games, Harmonious Asia.

The basin rose to be the main caldron for the Asian Games flame and rested in the center of a bridge that was also built to represent harmony.

The last five torchbearers also emerged from the water — Wu Guochong, the first of the five, is China's dragon boat team leader and he ran onto the stage straight from the Pearl River.

The last torchbearer, He Chong, the Asian and Olympic Games diving gold medalist, lit a huge Chinese firecracker with the help of two children and fireworks rose to light the main caldron, which realized a perfect combination of water and the games' flame.



Chen Weiya (left), director-in-chief of the opening ceremony of the 16th Asian Games, and one of his colleagues enjoy a moment of relaxation during a rehearsal in Guangzhou on Nov. 9.

YAN YAN / XINHUA

## It's show time for Asiad

### Director seeks great performance that goes beyond 'bigger is better'

By TANG YUE  
CHINA DAILY

GUANGZHOU — For choreographer Chen Weiya, there were several challenges to directing the opening ceremony of the Asian Games in Guangzhou.

One was simply to put on a great show, the other to distinguish it from the unparalleled opening of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

"You might think I must have used some ideas that weren't adopted for the opening of the Beijing Olympics. That's untrue," said Chen, who was deputy director-in-chief of the Beijing Games' opening ceremony — or the assistant of chief Zhang Yimou.

"I have thought about it. But it's not that easy. Because this is Guangzhou, not Beijing, we are holding the opening cer-

emony in Haixinsha, instead of the Bird's Nest, so many differences force you to be really creative."

A lot of people take delight in comparing the two ceremonies, but not Chen. He said his goal has never been to surpass the Beijing Games.

"A lot of people have asked me, 'Can you exceed the Beijing Olympics this time?' I don't like that word," he said. "The opening ceremony in Beijing set a milestone, one that is impossible to exceed in a short time. I just want to show the uniqueness of Guangzhou."

Unlike the traditional opening ceremony of big tournaments that are held in an enclosed stadium, the ceremony in Guangzhou is being staged on a shoal in the middle of the city.

He admits the new challenge at first made him reluctant to

take over the post.

"I was not 100 percent sure at the very beginning because no one has done this before," recalled Chen, who started working for the project last January.

"Fortunately, taking the Pearl River as the stage and the city as the background, we gave a really unique show."

In contrast to the 15,000 performers in Beijing, the number in Guangzhou was only about 6,000, which was fewer than the Beijing Asian Games 20 years ago.

That is partly due to the size of the site, but the director also wanted to look beyond the tradition of "the bigger, the better."

"Our foreign counterparts always envy us for being able to organize thousands of people to work together for one single performance," said Chen.

"However, it wouldn't be wise to become addicted to the massive-crowd style. It depends on what you want

to convey to the audience through the performance."

While the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics impressed the world with magnificent scenes, that in Guangzhou prominently featured the *Lingnan* (South China) culture, which is gentler and more romantic than the culture in North China.

On top of being the deputy director-in-chief of the opening ceremony in Beijing, Chen was managing director of the closing ceremony and has been the director of the CCTV spring festival gala four times.

However, the 54-year-old said he still enjoys working from the perspective of a newcomer.

"I always tell my coworkers that we should take every task as our first work. You can't repeat yourself," said Chen.

"You try to face it like a rookie. That's how you can always have great passion and put on a really great show."

## Realty: Investors will 'look for ways around rule'

FROM PAGE 1

US real estate company Jones Lang LaSalle published a survey on Friday that indicated that an overwhelming 76 percent of investors expect to be net buyers in the Asia Pacific region during the next 12 months.

According to Grant Ji, director of the investment department of real estate company Savills (Beijing), the way in

which "foreign institution" is defined in any new regulations will be crucial.

"If foreign institutions whose core business is asset investment are also included, the influence of this policy will be huge," Ji said.

Wei Dong, research head of DTZ (North China), said the new policy will further limit room for foreign institutional investors.

"Because the central govern-

ment has launched a slew of measures to curb residential home purchases and investment, an increasing amount of real estate capital has turned to the office and retail sectors. The launch of the new policy will also cap their investment in the commercial property sector," Wei said.

In September, Hong Kong-based Citic Capital Holdings Ltd invested 1.5 billion yuan (\$224 million) in a commercial

property project in Changsha, Hunan province. And Everbright Ashmore (Beijing) Real Estate Investment Consultancy Co Ltd, the property investment arm of Hong Kong-headquartered China Everbright Ltd, has invested \$25 million in a commercial project in Chongqing.

But for Gan Meilan, partner of US-based equity firm Prax Capital, their business will not be affected by the new policy because the company does not

## G20: Trade balance cap 'is not the cure'

FROM PAGE 1

"China is moving toward a better balance of economic growth, including lower current account surpluses ... as part of this, the yuan will appreciate more," O'Neill said.

Besides financial stability, Hu's speech also touched upon trade protectionism, the Doha Round of trade talks and financial regulatory reform.

Shi said the speech was a "proper and polite fight-back against the US" which has been blaming China for various economic issues including currency valuation.

The yuan has risen for four consecutive days, and the central bank set the yuan's daily reference rate at 6.6239 against the greenback on Friday, the strongest level in 17 years. The yuan has climbed 3 percent since mid June when China scrapped its dollar peg.

In his meeting with his US counterpart Barack Obama, Hu said China is determined to press ahead with the reform of the foreign exchange regime, but the pace should be "gradual and steady."

But Obama said at the media briefing on Friday that China's yuan was undervalued and the US expects China will make progress on the issue and is "confident it can happen", although this cannot happen overnight.

Gregory T. Chin, senior fellow of the Center for International Governance Innovation, a Canada-based think tank, said: "It's very important for China to demonstrate what it has been doing, and obviously, it's not useful to blame anyone."

"What is useful is to have all the G20 members understand how we are interconnected and interdependent."

On the US' monetary policy, Philip I. Levy, resident scholar with the American Enterprise Institute, said: "To the extent the quan-

titative easing succeeds in reflatting the US economy, it will diminish pressures for aggressive currency action. However, it's likely to exacerbate concerns among those countries uncomfortable with the way their currencies are appreciating, particularly the emerging markets."

In the speech, Hu urged the G20 members to "firmly push forward free trade and resist trade protectionism, reducing trade and investment barriers and coping with conflicts through dialogue."

### Trade imbalance

Ma Zhaoxu, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, said that the world's economic imbalance is a focal point.

During preparations for the summit, "some nations proposed to set a quantitative standard on the current account balance, which was opposed by many G20 members including China," he said in a statement.

The Seoul declaration highlighted that "member nations will pursue the full range of policies conducive to reducing excessive imbalances and maintaining current account imbalances at sustainable level."

The G20 members agreed to develop a system of indicators that will assess whether the path of global current account imbalances threatens to disrupt the world economy next year.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, said defining and fixing global imbalances is a process that requires more than one meeting.

"A 4-percent deficit doesn't mean the same thing for the emerging markets and developed economies," he said, referring to the US proposal of capping current account imbalance at 4 percent of GDP.

Li Xiaokun from Beijing, Tan Yingzi from Washington and Zhang Chunyan from London contributed to this story.

SAT - SUN NOVEMBER 13-14

# weather

TRAVELER'S FORECAST  
LOW/HIGH TEMPERATURES, IN DEGREES CELSIUS, AND EXPECTED CONDITIONS

Region	City	Sat	Sun	
CHINA	Beijing	4 / 9 S	-2 / 8 S	
	Changchun	-5 / 0 Sn	-10 / -5 C	
	Changsha	13 / 23 C	10 / 16 C	
	Chongqing	13 / 18 D	13 / 15 D	
	Dalian	6 / 10 S	1 / 7 S	
	Fuzhou	15 / 23 C	15 / 21 C	
	Guangzhou	16 / 26 D	17 / 25 D	
	Guilin	16 / 28 S	15 / 25 C	
	Guiyang	10 / 18 C	11 / 15 C	
	Haikou	18 / 24 Sh	18 / 23 D	
	Hangzhou	12 / 23 C	12 / 16 O	
	Harbin	-8 / -3 Sn	-9 / -3 Sn	
	Hefei	10 / 20 C	8 / 12 D	
	Hohhot	-3 / 2 C	-4 / 1 C	
	Hongkong	19 / 23 Sh	19 / 23 Sh	
Jinan	7 / 14 C	1 / 8 C		
Kunming	8 / 17 Sh	7 / 18 C		
Lanzhou	-2 / 11 C	-1 / 11 S		
Lhasa	-1 / 13 O	-2 / 12 O		
Lijiang	4 / 18 C	5 / 15 Sh		
Macao	18 / 22 Sh	18 / 24 Sh		
Nanchang	13 / 23 C	13 / 20 C		
Nanjing	8 / 21 C	10 / 15 O		
Nanning	18 / 28 C	17 / 27 C		
Qingdao	11 / 16 C	5 / 12 C		
Sanya	22 / 29 C	21 / 29 C		
EUROPE	Athens	14 / 22 C	14 / 22 Sh	
	Berlin	8 / 13 R	10 / 15 O	
	Brussels	11 / 14 D	11 / 13 R	
	Geneva	9 / 15 C	4 / 14 C	
	Istanbul	14 / 19 C	13 / 19 C	
	London	10 / 13 R	7 / 11 D	
	Madrid	4 / 17 C	5 / 13 C	
	Moscow	7 / 11 D	5 / 10 Sh	
	Paris	12 / 15 R	11 / 13 R	
	Rome	9 / 21 C	11 / 21 C	
	Vienna	9 / 17 O	8 / 13 C	
	ASIA-PACIFIC-MIDDLE EAST	Abu Dhabi	20 / 29 D	18 / 30 D
		Bangkok	24 / 33 C	25 / 34 C
		Colombo	25 / 32 T	24 / 30 T
		Dubai	21 / 31 C	21 / 32 S
Hanoi		21 / 27 O	21 / 28 O	
Islamabad		9 / 27 S	7 / 26 S	
Jakarta		24 / 32 T	24 / 32 T	
Karachi		20 / 32 C	21 / 33 C	
Kuala Lumpur		24 / 33 T	25 / 34 T	
Manila		25 / 32 T	25 / 32 T	
Mumbai		25 / 32 Sh	24 / 32 C	
New Delhi		16 / 30 S	16 / 30 S	
Pyongyang		2 / 13 O	0 / 8 Sh	
Riyadh		15 / 29 S	15 / 28 S	
Seoul		5 / 16 C	5 / 9 C	
Singapore	25 / 31 T	26 / 32 T		
Sydney	19 / 26 C	20 / 27 C		
Teheran	9 / 19 S	11 / 19 S		
Tokyo	12 / 19 O	13 / 20 O		
Wellington	14 / 18 C	14 / 18 S		
Yangon	21 / 34 C	22 / 34 C		
AMERICAS	BuenosAires	16 / 24 C	17 / 23 C	
	Chicago	8 / 16 Sh	4 / 10 Sh	
	Caracas	25 / 32 T	26 / 31 T	
	Houston	15 / 19 T	11 / 22 T	
	Las Vegas	9 / 17 C	8 / 18 C	
	Los Angeles	12 / 24 C	12 / 22 S	
	Mexico City	9 / 24 S	10 / 24 S	
	New York	11 / 16 S	11 / 15 S	
	Ottawa	4 / 9 O	1 / 7 C	
	Rio De Janeiro	20 / 24 Sh	20 / 23 Sh	
San Francisco	10 / 20 C	12 / 23 C		
Sao Paulo	15 / 19 Sh	15 / 21 Sh		
Vancouver	5 / 9 Sh	6 / 10 R		
Washington	7 / 18 S	8 / 16 S		
AFRICA	Cairo	19 / 34 C	20 / 30 S	
	CapeTown	14 / 23 C	13 / 27 S	
	Johannesburg	16 / 29 C	16 / 27 C	
	Lagos	25 / 31 T	24 / 32 T	
	Nairobi	14 / 26 C	14 / 26 C	