

## LOC praises media for world cup coverage

Just a week after the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper castigated him over his young brother's mysterious lucrative hospitality deal related to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Local Organising Committee (LOC) CEO Danny Jordaan - usually a cool character - praised the media for its extraordinary support of the tournament.

 Bylssa Sikiti da Silva 2 Jul 2010



### "Extraordinarily incredible"

"The media's support for this event has been extraordinarily incredible," Jordaan told a large contingent of local and international journalists earlier yesterday, Thursday, 1 July 2010, in Sandton, Johannesburg. The press conference was jointly called by the Gauteng Provincial Government and LOC to reflect on the tournament and its impact on the host count to date.

Jordaan said LOC was happy and comfortable with what it has seen so far on TV, radio, print and online, and was hopeful the relationship (with the media) will continue after the world cup.

"If you ask us questions we will respond, but if we don't know then we don't know," Jordaan said, flanked by Gauteng Premier Nomvula Mokonyane, Gauteng Transport MEC Bheki Nkosi and Brazilian soccer ace Cafu.

Apart from a few headlines, cartoons and editorials crucifying FIFA president Sepp Blatter for his stubbornness to implement goal-line technology and slamming bad refereeing, South African newspapers' coverage - usually hot-tempered - has largely been positive and balanced so far towards the world cup.

### Gone the extra mile

Some have even gone the extra mile in their coverage of the tournament, going as far as dedicating six to seven pages and thick supplements and including sharp and memorable pictures in their quest to deliver a comprehensive analysis of the event.

A total of 56 games have already been played, watched by some 2.68 million soccer fans at stadiums and more than 1.5 million at FIFA fan parks across the country, the organisers said.

"Our aim is to go beyond the three million mark at stadiums and if we do, SA will have the highest attendance ever since the 1994 World Cup in the US," Jordaan said.

Close to 365 000 soccer fans have visited SA during the first two weeks of world cup, and with the tournament not over yet the figure of 500 000 predicted two years ago well before the global economic crisis, which many blame for the stay-away, may still be met or surpassed.

It is believed that soccer fans have already spent some R6.5 billion during the first two weeks, and it looks like the target of R11.2 billion is well on track. The last 10 days will be crucial to see if that figure could be indeed achieved.

### "People-driven"

"This is a wonderful people-driven world cup... And this is what football is about," Jordaan said.

Gauteng Premier Mokonyane said: "We are happy about the social cohesion, unity and common identity we have experienced so far in this competition and we are hoping that this spirit will be sustained well after the world cup is long gone."

"Sometimes, as a government you cannot always institutionalise social cohesion, but what you can do is to give individuals the space to do their own things."

Former Brazilian soccer star Cafu said he was highly impressed by the exceptional organisation of the tournament and was hopeful his country will learn a lot from SA.

#### **Other World Cup news:**

- Times Live: [Durban served Pepsi to World Cup volunteers](#)

#### **ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA**

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.  
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