

International Broadcast Centre ready to welcome 2010 media

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The International Broadcast Centre (IBC) is up and running and ready to welcome 13 000 accredited journalists and 179 licensee broadcasting entities from 70 countries around the world who will produce images and sounds and all the excitement of the 2010 FIFA World Cup under the blessing and supervision of France-based Host Broadcast Services (HBS).



Sneak preview

A sneak preview of the 75 000 m² compound late last week by over 100 local and international journalists revealed a gigantic monster fitted with 600 tons of broadcasting material, huge satellite dishes, 50 presentation studios, 5070 video circuits, 30 interview studios, 10 fly-away kits, 1900km of cabling and an IT pro-active monitoring section.

At least 2750 feeds (18 distinct feeds for each match) will be produced by HBS, which will have some 2600 staff members originating from 50 countries working at the centre. The number of pallets with cameras, tripods and lenses is 200, coupled with 700 unilateral camera positions.

HBS CEO Francis Tellier said 25 world cup games will be shown on 3D, a project undertaken by two production teams and 100 people to be based at the IBC. There will be eight 3D cameras per game, come 11 June 2010.

HBS is contracted to FIFA since 2007 for the provision of all host broadcast aspects - radio, TV, broadband and mobile - for various sporting events. HBS will capture the images of every game and provides a world unilateral feed. Licensee broadcasting entities will also capture unilateral feeds for their own audiences.

Master control room

The IBC's technical facilities include a master control room (MCR) - a central distribution point for all incoming (venue and

non-venue) and outgoing feeds (telecommunications and satellite farms), and a commentary switching centre.

There is also a production control room, quality control room, show live production rooms, permanent highlights live production rooms, a FIFA Max server logging room and a 5.1 surround sound room, among others. There will be 30-32 cameras for each game. All operations cost about 100 million euros, Tellier told the media.

"Images produced here will go to 214 countries around the world, and we are proud to say that we are ready," FIFA TV director Niclas Ericsson said.

About 26.3 billion people watched the 2006 World Cup in Germany and it is estimated that number could reach 30 billion in South Africa this year.

16 generators

A total of 16 generators have been installed at the IBC to provide for backup power - a partnership between Cyril Ramaphosa's Shanduka Energy and British firm Aggreko.

The IBC, a multimillion rand investment by the City of Johannesburg, is located 600m from the majestic Soccer City Stadium - the venue for the opening and closing ceremony as well as the inaugural and final games.

Johannesburg executive mayor Amos Masondo said: "This is a very important development that will attract investment and aims to ensure that infrastructure becomes a legacy in this part of the city."

Masondo, who last week announced that the city's 2010-2011 total budget amounts to R28.3 billion, added: "The IBC is one of the major achievements that we will point at in the future and say that the goals we have set have indeed become reality."

Begun rounding up

Meanwhile, the City of Johannesburg has begun rounding up vagrants, blind beggars, hawkers trading 'illegally', prostitutes and women begging with babies at intersections ahead of the 11 June's kick off. Beggars and hawkers who spoke to Bizcommunity.com alleged that metro cops beat them up. Rights groups accuse city officials of being 'inhuman' by hiding Joburg's true face of poverty ahead of the world cup.

But city spokesperson Virgil James denied these allegations. He told Bizcommunity.com the city is merely enforcing by-laws by moving them to temporary shelters until they get adequate help.

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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