



### **Spectators and Athletes experiences Indian culture at Shiv Chatrapati Sports Complex**

Thursday 16th October 2008 marked the penultimate day of cultural events at the Youth Games here in Pune.

A great success of the day was the performance of the Kathakali, known as one of the oldest theatre forms in the world. Under Kathakali dancers took various roles in performances based on themes from Hindu mythology, especially the two epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. One of the most interesting aspects of the Kathakali was the elaborate makeup code. This dramatic addition to Thursday's line up contributed to the fun loving ambience of the day.

The most popular stall of the night at the cultural centre was by far the Tanjore painting. It is an important form of classical South Indian art, native to the town of Tamil Nadu. The form dates back to the early 9<sup>th</sup> century, a period dominated by the Chola rulers, who encouraged art and literature. The themes for most of these paintings are Hindu Gods and Goddesses and scenes from Hindu mythology. In today's times, these paintings had become a much sort after souvenir during festive occasions in South India.

The evenings events, which kicked off at 6.30pm proved to be not only the biggest in terms of attendance but also the best yet. The athletes were in high spirits mirroring the successful day had by all and the anticipation of tomorrow's final day of play excluding tennis, which concludes on Saturday. They joined in with Charkula's native dance to the tunes of Rasia, the song of Lord Krishna. In this particular dance, the woman dresses in long skirts that reach down to the toes. They are donned in colourful blouses and the dancers cover both their bodies and faces with a veil. These women carry a large multi-tiered circular wooden pyramid on their heads, balancing a staggering 108 oil lamps whilst dancing. A great feat unable to be mastered by the athletes, a truly skillful dance! A great night enjoyed by all who took part was also encompassed by the expectation and apprehension of what tomorrow may hold for finalists in the Badminton, Boxing, Shooting, Swimming and Weightlifting disciplines.