

**Press release**

**Dubai set to bowl over sporting enthusiasts as it plays host to first phase of the Pepsi Indian Premier League’s 2014 season**

*Emirate to host seven of the 20 Indian Premier League matches in the UAE at Dubai International Cricket Stadium*

**Dubai, UAE; 1 April 2014:**  Following an announcement by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) that the first phase of the Pepsi Indian Premier League 2014 (IPL) will be jointly held in the United Arab Emirates (April 16-30), Dubai is gearing up to welcome fans from near and far for the league’s 7th season. Starting on April 19th, Dubai will host of seven of the IPL’s 20 UAE matches at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. The games are expected to be a major pull for tourists in the Emirate as it further adds to the city’s growing calendar of entertainment and events.

“This is an excellent opportunity for Dubai to once again showcase to the world that it is a first-class sporting destination,” said Hamad Bin Mejren, Executive Director of Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing. “Among sports fans, the IPL will attract global attention and will put Dubai and the UAE firmly in the spotlight, further cementing Dubai’s position as a dynamic events destination in the MENASA region.”

Along with being a key draw and highlight event for visitors to Dubai, the IPL will also ensure that the eyes of the world will be fixed on the Emirates throughout the 14-day tournament, with cricket fans the world over tuning in to watch each of the matches.

 “World-class sporting events such as the IPL are also a major focus for Dubai to achieve His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum’s Tourism Vision 2020 of welcoming 20 million guests by 2020, “ added Hamad Bin Mejren. “Hosting of the IPL is both a fantastic achievement for the city and its global event standing, as well as a key stepping stone in this vision being realised.”

Winding up to deliver its seven matches, Dubai International Cricket Stadium’s first fixture will see the Royal Challengers Bangalore face the Mumbai Indians on Saturday April 19 at 2.30pm GST. That same day, the Kolkata Knight Riders will go head to head against the Delhi Daredevils with on-pitch action taking place from 6.30pm GST. On April 23 at 6.30pm GST, the Rajasthan Royals will take on the Chennai Super Kings, while April 25th will see the Sunrisers Hyderabad face the Delhi Daredevils at 2.30pm GST, and the Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians do battle from 6.30pm GST. Rounding out the Dubai-based matches will be the Royal Challengers Bangalore, Kings XI Punjab game at 6.30pm GST on April 28, followed by the Mumbai Indians match on Sunrisers Hyderabad at 6.30pm GST on April 30.

Following a recent inspection of the facilities in the UAE, M. V. Sridhar, General Manager of Cricket Operations, BCCI, said: “We are very happy with the facilities at the venues that will be hosting the UAE leg of the Pepsi IPL 2014. The infrastructure is on par with any of the leading international venues.

“Considering the amount of cricket that has been played at these venues, the ground and pitch maintenance is noteworthy. We are confident that the facilities and ground conditions will provide the platform for an exciting first leg of the Pepsi IPL 2014”, continued Sridhar.

International Cricket Council (ICC) Chief Executive David Richardson, who is based in the UAE at the ICC headquarters in Dubai Sports City, welcomed the decision to come to the UAE: “The BCCI’s decision to stage the first part of the IPL 2014 season in the UAE is great news for the people of the UAE. It will do wonders for cricket in the region, in particular in Dubai where the ICC is located.

“Dubai’s hosting of the IPL will complete a remarkable season of cricket in the UAE, which has already seen the successful staging of the ICC World Twenty20 Qualifier 2013 and the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup 2014,” added Richardson.

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**About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM)**

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing’s (DTCM) mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai to global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the Emirate.

DTCM is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector; markets and promotes the Emirate’s commerce sector; and is responsible for the licencing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the DTCM portfolio include Dubai Convention and Events Bureau, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (formerly known as Dubai Events and Promotions Establishment). In addition to its headquarters in Dubai, DTCM operates 20 offices worldwide.

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