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Youth Olympic Games, Asian Games, Asian Beach Games are major sporting events for 2010

THE country's coming participation in three major sporting events topped the agenda of the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) Executive Board's first meeting for the year 2010.

The 16-man body headed by POC president Jose 'Peping' Cojuangco Jr. discussed the Filipinos' campaign in the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore, the Asian Games in Guangzhou, China and the 2nd Asian Beach Games in Muscat, Oman.

Although the Guangzhou Asiad is definitely the top concern of the country's Olympic body, the RP delegation's stint in the inaugural staging of the Youth Olympic Games will be given a lot of attention not simply because it is the country's first major international sporting event for the year but also because it is the first ever Olympic Games for 14-18 year-old athletes.

Set from August 14-26, the Singapore Games is the IOC's new baby, and the first Olympic Games to be created by the body since the Winter Games in 1924.

"All of us are obsessed with the youth because the IOC is obsessed with it," said POC board member Mark Joseph, who is also the President of the Philippine Aquatics Sports Association (PASA).

Joseph was appointed Chef De Mission of the two-week long meet, which he said is going to be competitive as a total of 205 countries will be vying in just 26 sports events.

So far, swimmers Jessie Lacuna, Jasmine Alkhalidi, Banjo Borja, Dorothy Hong and Jose Gonzales have already qualified for the Youth Games, along with two archers, three shooters, the three-on-three basketball team and rising netter Francis Casey Alcantara.

Joseph added that other qualifiers in equestrian, shooting, archery, boxing and taekwondo will be held in the coming months till May.

During the same Board meeting, the appointments of Joey Romasanta as Chef De Mission for the Guangzhou Asiad (November 12-27), and Jeff Tamayo as Chef De Mission for the Asian Beach Games (December 8-18), were formalized.