



Ready for any weather

By TANG ZHE
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Rain, rain, go away. Or better yet, don't come in the first place.

According to the Shenzhen Weather Bureau, the heavy rainfall which hit the city this week is expected to be gone before the opening of the 26th Summer Universiade.

The forecast shows the opening ceremony, to be held at Shenzhen Bay Sports Center Stadium at 8 pm on Friday, will proceed in cloudy weather. There might be some showers during the day, but no typhoons or rainstorms.

"According to our current statistics, the opening ceremony will not be influenced by harsh weather such as heavy rain," said Zhang Lei, deputy chief of the Universiade weather service center.

"The occasional shower during the day may to some extent affect the pre-opening preparations of the ceremony, but there is little possibility the weather



ZOU ZHONGPIN / CHINA DAILY

Shi Gang, director of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies Department, promises punctual ceremonies.

will influence the performance and the rite.

"Even if extreme weather comes, we have certain contingencies to avoid its impact to the opening."

Shi Gang, director at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies Department, revealed emergency plans and said the world's university athletes would be welcomed at a punctual ceremony.

"The opening ceremony must be held on time," he said. "The Shenzhen Weather Bureau has begun to provide weather information for

the opening ceremony every half an hour. There is also a team on site for weather forecasting."

The organizing committee has also prepared enough disposable raincoats and large umbrellas in the stadium to tackle a manageable shower. If it rains heavily, we will go to two plans.

"According to our experience, heavy rain tends to stop within half an hour in rainy season, while moderate rain may take a little bit longer," Shi said. "If the rain slows before 8pm, the ceremony will start as scheduled, and we have about 100 staff members to clean the stage before and during the opening."

"If the ceremony is interrupted by heavy rain, we will stop temporarily to ensure the safety of our performers, which is our priority," Shi said.

A shift of stadium is also possible if a rainstorm or typhoon hits Shenzhen Bay.

"We will hold the opening ceremony at the Main Stadium of the Universiade Center if we are warned of the coming of a rainstorm or typhoon," Shi said.

Lots of substance, but a little style, too

SHENZHEN — It's sports over spectacle.

The opening ceremony of the 26th Summer Universiade will forgo a glitzy performance on Friday, highlighting instead the students and games themselves.

"The opening ceremony will emphasize the rite and play down the role of the show," said Shi Gang, director of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies Department. "As we have publicized, there will be no fireworks and no big stars in the ceremony. Instead, almost 90 percent of our performers will be university students."

Students' fingerprints will be all over the ceremony.

Twenty university students from Shenzhen designed the clothes members of all 152 delegations will wear at the ceremony, as well as the posters that will be on display.

Shi said Shenzhen Universiade Foundation will also be on hand

after the ceremony. The foundation offers scholarships to foreign students from developing countries who want to study in China, and supports Chinese students with financial difficulties who want to study abroad.

Athletes, too, will get their day in the sun. The entire contingent will be invited into the stadium early in the ceremony to enjoy it with the audience.

Dong Xuehai, deputy director of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies Department, revealed the Universiade flame will be lit by an athlete, though he refused to say more.

"The flame will be lit by an athlete, because this is a sports extravaganza and sportsmanship is very important," he said.

Shenzhen subway's hours of operation will be extended until 12:30am to accommodate extra traffic.

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Universiade SHENZHEN 2011

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