

CNS5123

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GOVT ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO TAKE UP EQUESTRIAN SPORT

Mahathir-equestrian

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- The government will provide financial assistance and scholarships to encourage the people to take up the equestrian-sport to bring Malaysia international acclaim, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He also said that the private sector could provide similar incentives for the talented who did not have the means, as was 'being done in other sports.

The country needed efficient equestrians and equestriennes able to participate at the international level, and therefore, the sport should be promoted for all walks of society, to scout for new talents, he said when opening the Bukit Kiara Equestrian and Country Resort in Bukit Kiara here.

'The assumption that equestrian is a sport for the rich is no longer true and should be discarded.' Equestrian is a sport which a person from any level of society can attempt, he said.

Just like badminton which brought fame for Malaysia in the international world of sports, it would be good if equestrian could become a major national sport in the future, he said. -- more

10/10/12-45MST

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Mahathir-equestrian 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Dr Mahathir said that as the sport did not require the athlete to be tall and of big build, there was a good chance of Malaysians doing well in it at the international level.

He then launched the Equine Council of Malaysia which would handle the promotion and coordination of the sport.

He said he hoped that the council would be able to kindle the interest of the people to take up equestrian and produce champions for national and international meets.

Dr Mahathir praised the Bukit Kiara recreation club's initiative, in organising equestrian championships and demonstrations to popularise the sport.

He said the selection of the club to host the lawn bowls event of the 1998 Commonwealth Games could be well used to demonstrate the country's ability in handling international sports activities. -- Bernama

10/10/12 5PM

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Mahathir-equestrian 3 (last) Kuala Lumpur (reopens)

✓ Dr Mahathir told reporters later that although equestrian was not an event of the 1998 Commonwealth Games, Malaysia could send its athletes to many other international competitions.

The chairman of the Equine Council of Malaysia protem committee, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, said the council was set up on the initiative of the Prime Minister and would strive to popularise the equestrian sport in the country.

Among the strategies of the council was to help extend facilities for the sport to youths and, students, he said. -- Bernma

▼10/10/1 5-44MST