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Hashim: Now there is a clearer chain of command

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Sukom 98 Bhd executive chairman Jen (B) Tan Sri Hashim Mohamed Ali has dismissed the notion that his powers have eroded under the new organisational format for the 1998 Commonwealth Games now supervised by Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

"What has happened is that there is now a clearer chain of command," he said. "What it means to me, as a former army officer, is that there is a very clear distinction of command. It is important. Now, I go direct to Tan Sri Muhyiddin. That is it.

"When it comes to accountability, it is him (Muhyiddin) who is fully responsible."

Speaking after signing a sponsorship agreement with Canon Marketing (M) Sdn Bhd, Hashim said earlier he reported directly to the Commonwealth Games Council chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed.

Dr Mahathir has now delegated the power to Muhyiddin.

On his position in the Games Management committee, which he chairs jointly with Olympic Council of Malaysia president Tan Sri Hamzah Abu Samah, Hashim said it will be discussed later.

"I may become deputy chairman to the Minister. I don't know."

Under the new format, all 12 major Games committees will report directly to Muhyiddin.

Asked who will take responsibility if things go wrong during the Games, Hashim said as far as the actual running of the Games, it would be Sukom 98 Bhd.

"If you want to start pointing fingers at anybody later on, as far as the country is concerned, it is the Youth and Sports Minister who is responsible," he said.

Hashim was responding to Muhyiddin's statement yesterday that the Cabinet has directed him (Muhyiddin) to play the leading role in making preparations for the Games.

On Monday, Hashim tendered his resignation following criticisms by Muhyiddin and Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik, who took Sukom to task for not doing enough to publicise the Games.

Hashim claimed he was particularly offended by Sabbaruddin's remarks that Sukom was more concerned with profits and that its officers were travelling first class on overseas trips.

However, Hashim withdrew his resignation a day later after acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim made what he claimed to be a "humble appeal" to stay on.

Hashim described the Cabinet decision as "marvellous and first class."

He said Anwar briefed him this morning on what transpired at the Cabinet meeting.

Anwar, he said, also requested that he be given a joint-briefing on the Games preparation by Sukom and the Ministry next month.

As for his relationship with Sabbaruddin, Hashim said he has invited the Minister for a "round of golf."

Later, Sabbaruddin said the chapter is "closed" and the differences with Hashim resolved.

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