

01/01/1997

KL a compulsory stop after Durban

Randhir Singh

THE International Amateur Athletic Federation will ensure athletes competing in the World Cup in Durban stop in Kuala Lumpur for the 1998 Commonwealth Games enroute to their respective destinations.

The IAAF will book airline tickets for Commonwealth athletes with a stop-over in Kuala Lumpur enroute to home.

"This is one method of getting all the top athletes to grace the Games," said Sukom '98 executive chairman Jen (rtd) Tan Sri Hashim Ali.

"IAAF are totally in favour of making both the events a great success."

The World Cup, to be held on Sept 11-13 in South Africa, had earlier clashed with the Commonwealth Games which were fixed for Sept 10-20.

But the Games have now been shifted to Sept 12-21 with several changes to the athletic programme to accommodate the World Cup.

The World Cup, one of the premier events in the world sports calendar, offers a Mercedes Benz as a prize and IAAF pay for all athletes to compete.

Hashim said he met IAAF president Primo Nebiolo in Mexico City last month and he gave the assurance.

"He is very pleased with Malaysia, having been in Kuala Lumpur in 1991 for the Asian Track and Field meet. He said that IAAF are in full support of the Games."

Hashim met Nebiolo with Commonwealth Games Federation president Mike Fennell.

Hashim said it was also decided that Malaysia will host an international athletics meet in May, 1998.

"The Malaysian AAU will liaise with the IAAF and we will provide some support. We will try to get some prominent names to attract the crowd to the Bukit Jalil Stadium."

Hashim said Nebiolo will be a guest of Sukom.

He said the Commonwealth Games Council, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, have agreed to an idea from the traffic police that a marathon be organised on a week-day sometime next year as a trial-run.

"Essentially, it is to test the traffic flow. To see if there would be any congestion assuming we hold it on a week-day in 1998."

(END)