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Muhyiddin-Olympics

MALAYSIA KEEN TO HOST OLYMPICS BEFORE 2020

By: Zulkiflee Djasman

KUALA LUMPUR, April 11 (Bernama) -- Malaysia may bid to host the Olympics before 2020 if the 16th Commonwealth Games to be held here this September prove to be a big success, Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

Any such bid for the Olympic Games would also be subject to Malaysia being awarded the 2006 Asian Games and successfully staging it, he said.

"We will prove to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) our country's ability to host major sporting events like the Commonwealth Games in the hope that they will entrust us with organising the Olympic Games before 2020," he said.

The 16th Commonwealth Games and 2006 Asian Games would provide good opportunities for Malaysia to gain the necessary experience to stage the world's biggest sporting event, he told reporters after launching the online ticketing system and website of Ticket Express, the official ticketing agent for the KL 98 Games.

The Olympic Council of Malaysia has expressed Malaysia's desire to host the 2006 Asian Games.

In his speech, Muhyiddin said the government had approved ticket prices ranging from RM5 to RM500 for the Games from Sept 11-21.

"More aggressive promotions should be held to ensure that the 1.28 million tickets could be sold before the Games start. The people must go and watch the Games at the venues," he said.

So far 40,932 tickets worth RM4.198 million have been sold, with aquatics being the most popular sport with 12,991 ticket bookings valued at RM1.58 million while bookings for 5,560 tickets worth RM1.49 million have been received for the opening ceremony.

Muhyiddin said booking of tickets should be made easier to encourage the people to buy them through various channels.

At today's launch, Ticket Express appointed Fascard Sdn Bhd, KUB Sistem Sdn Bhd and Gergasi Merah Sdn Bhd as the vendors to sell tickets on the Internet.

Ticket Express executive chairman Datuk Seri Ram Sarma said the appointments of these vendors would facilitate ticket sales because they had nationwide networks covering post offices, Kedai Telecom, Bank Bumiputra branches, stadiums and vans serving as mobile outlets.

"The public can buy the tickets in cash, by credit card or make bookings via the Internet with the help of the appointed vendors," he said.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today became the first person to book tickets on the Internet using the website www.ticketexpress.com.my.

While making his booking, the Prime Minister appeared on the Internet to advise sports fans to book their tickets early to avoid congestion or the disappointment of missing out on supporting the country's athletes. --

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ZJ YBY