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Games-Mahathir

MALAYSIA TO BID FOR 2008 OLYMPIC GAMES

By: E. Sivabalan

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 20 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games now that it has successfully staged the 16th Commonwealth Games here, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.

He said Kuala Lumpur would "register its willingness" to host the world's number one sports event.

"I doubt whether we can succeed (in our bid) but we will make a bid anyway," he said when asked if Malaysia would bid to host the Olympic Games.

Speaking at a news conference after visiting the 16th Commonwealth Games Main Press Centre (MPC) here, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia should be able to make an appeal to host the 2008 Olympic.

He, however, said there were certain pre-conditions to play host to the Olympic Games.

For a start, Malaysia needed to have a fairly good number of athletes to compete against world-class sportsmen.

"We can't just be the host with no (competitive) participation. So that is little bit more difficult to produce than just to build stadiums," the prime minister added.

International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch had indicated last week that a host country also needed to have a fairly sizeable number of world-class athletes.

Sydney will host the 2000 Olympics while Athens will be host in 2004.

-- BERNAMA

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