

13/09/1998

Looking into bidding for 2008 Olympics

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Malaysia will study the possibility of bidding for the 2008 Olympics, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said although bids had not opened, a number of countries had shown strong interest to host the world's biggest Games.

Sydney will organise the 2000 Olympic Games while Athens will be host in 2004.

"We will study whether we can host the Games or not," he told reporters after a visit to the Commonwealth Games' Corporate Hospitality Village at the National Sports Complex in Bukit Jalil.

Malaysia is hosting the 16th Commonwealth Games, held for the first time in Asia. It was opened by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Ja'afar, in a glittering ceremony last night.

Dr Mahathir said to be hosts, having adequate facilities was not enough.

"We need to have a sizeable number of top local athletes to attract strong spectator interest," he said.

Dr Mahathir also commented on the performance of Malaysian cyclist Nor Effandy Rosli, who won the country's first medal in the Games, a silver in the men's 184km individual road race today.

"I am thankful that we won a medal on the first day," he said.

Later tonight, Dr Mahathir Mohamad held a dinner reception for Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) officials.

He and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali were greeted by CGF president Prince Edward, chairman Michael Fennel and Commonwealth secretary-general Chief Emeka Anyaoku. Also present were Sukom 98 Berhad executive chairman Tan Sri Hashim Mohd Ali.

(END)