

25 FEB 1999

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MALAYSIA OFFERS 33 EVENTS FOR 2006 ASIAN GAMES

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 33 (Bernama) -- Malaysia plans to hold 33 events for the 2006 Asian Games if the country is chosen to host the competition, Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

However this would be reviewed before the official bid to host the games was submitted next year, he said after chairing the 2006 Asian Games bid committee here.

"The events have been agreed to by the bid committee and it would be reviewed before the official bid is submitted," he said.

Muhyiddin said the events offered should be related to Malaysia's bid strategy in hosting the games.

"We want to ensure that the events offered draw interest from all competing nations apart from giving the national contingent the chance in winning medals...this are among the points which should be seriously considered," he said.

The meeting also identified strategies which could help the bid efforts like meeting envoys of competing nations in Kuala Lumpur.

"The committee would send representatives to garner support especially from the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) affiliates," he said.

He said officials from the OCA and competing nations would be brought to see sports facilities in the country.

Muhyiddin said lobbying for the right to host the games would also involved tour agencies and sports bodies with close rapport with OCA affiliates.

Asked on the mascot for the games, Muhyiddin said it would be announced after obtaining the green light from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The mascot will have Malaysian features but it should be agreed to by the Prime Minister and this includes the games theme song," he said.

Among nations expected to challenge Malaysia's bid to host the 2006 Asian Games are Qatar, Syria, India and Indonesia.

-- BERNAMA

AHA ZUL