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Hishammuddin: We're confident

S. Selvam

KUALA Lumpur has fulfilled admirably all the Olympic Council of Asia's requirements to host the 2006 Asian Games, said Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein in Putrajaya yesterday.

Superb facilities are in place, the Government fully committed to supporting the bid, and the people are all for Kuala Lumpur to host the Games, said Hishammuddin at the Press conference after the four-man OCA evaluation team had paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Putrajaya.

"Prime Minister Dr Mahathir has assured them the unequivocal support and commitment of the Malaysian Government," said Hishammuddin.

"With the support of the Government, the Olympic Council of Malaysia, the Sports Ministry, media and importantly, the people of Malaysia, we are confident of our bid."

Hishammuddin said he will seek the further assistance of KL mayor Tan Sri Kamaruzaman Mohamed Syarif and OCM president Tunku Imran Tuanku Jaafar as they continue efforts to get the support of OCA affiliated countries to support Kuala Lumpur's bid.

The four-member OCA team, led by Muhammad Latif Butt of Pakistan, spent the last two days inspecting the facilities in Kuala Lumpur.

Other members of the team are OCA treasurer Santiparb Tejavaniya, sports committee chairman Dr Muwaffak Fawaz and international relations manager Vinod Kiwari.

Latif, who is OCA vice-president, described Malaysia's bid as "so far so good" and is happy with the assurance given by Dr Mahathir.

He was also particularly impressed with "the harmonious working relationship of all parties involved."

Among the venues the OCA team visited were the National Sports Complex in Bukit Jalil, the International Broadcast Centre in Angkasapuri, University Putra Malaysia which would be site of the Games Village and other venues.

Latif, however, refused to compare Kuala Lumpur's facilities with those in two other bid cities, Doha (Qatar) and New Delhi (India), which the team had inspected earlier.

"Our job is not to compare but verify the content of the bid and the task of evaluating and comparing the various bids will be done by the delegates at the general assembly."

The OCA team leave today for Hong Kong, the fourth city bidding for the Games.

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