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Sports-Cycling (LTdL)

INVITE FOR PRO OUTFITS FROM SPAIN, PORTUGAL - FIRST CARTEL

LANGKAWI, Nov 2 (Bernama) -- Two professional outfits, one each from Spain and Portugal, were among new teams invited to take part in next year's Le Tour de Langkawi (LTdL) on Feb 4-18, said organiser First Cartel Sdn Bhd.

Its executive chairman Datuk Wan Lokman Wan Ibrahim said reply from the invited teams were expected to be received by end of this month, the deadline for submitting entries.

"We hope (teams) will take part in the 6th edition of the LTdL," he told reporters here.

The LTdL has 12 stages, covering a distance of 1,838km, making it a leading cycling tour in Asia.

Wan Lokman said a world-ranked French professional outfit, Credit Agricole, had expressed their willingness to take part in the LTdL 2001.

First Cartel expected 13 professional teams who took part in previous editions of the LTdL to return to the competition next year.

These include Saturn and Mercury of the United States, Linda Mc Cartney (Britain), Bonjour and Big Mat (Perancis), Cantina Tollo, Mapei from Italy, Gerolsteiner (Germany) and Collstrop (Belgium).

He said the national teams invited were Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, China, Japan, South Africa, Canada and Denmark.

In the 2001 LTdL, the number of competing teams is maintained at 25 but each side is allowed to have seven riders instead of six on previous occasions.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will flag-off the event at the Dataran Lang here.

-- BERNAMA

ZI NH ZUL