

Ministry to promote extreme sports

SUN, 22 OCT 2001

PENANG, Sun: The Youth and Sports Ministry will liaise with the Education Ministry to help boost interest in extreme sports in schools.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein said today that currently, there is no coordinated effort to help promote "high performance sports" in the country.

He said Malaysia's initiation into the extreme sports arena will receive a well-needed boost when it hosts the Asian Extreme Sports next year.

Since it is still a fairly new sport, a lot of planning and training development is needed from all parties, including the athletes.

"The sport has a lot of

potential. The question is how to promote it, train the athletes and also expose the sport to youths," he said after attending the national sport climbing competition at the Batu Uban Sports Complex.

"The best way is through the schools and we will be working with the Education Ministry to help towards this effort.

"I hope extreme sports will attract those who are not attracted to traditional forms of sports. The sport will certainly help students stay away from drugs as it needs a lot of energy and concentration."

Among the extreme sports categories are wall climbing, inline skating, skate boarding and BMX.

The ministry is working

with the ESPN and Disney channels in holding the Asian Extreme Sports games here.

"I am very glad that the prime minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) has given the sport its due recognition in the Budget and this will raise awareness and help the country produce champions in these fields," he said.

Hishammuddin said Malaysia needed coaches and more extreme sports sites. The infrastructure needed included ramps, rinks and climbing walls.

He said he is working with the respective state government but, so far, only Penang has given the green light for a extreme sports site in every district.