

06 DEC 2001

Sports-Sukma

2002 SUKMA PREPARATIONS ON TRACK, SAYS CHONG

KOTA KINABALU, Dec 6 (Bernama) -- After experiencing some glitches early this year, preparations for the 9th Malaysia Games (Sukma) in Sabah next year are now progressing according to schedule.

Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat, who chaired the Sukma 2002 main committee meeting today, said some of the preparations were even ahead of schedule.

"The renovation work on the main venue, the Likas Sports Complex, is going on very satisfactorily...it is actually running ahead of schedule," he told a news conference after the meeting, at which various committees tabled reports on the status of their work.

Work on the Likas Sports Complex had been affected by some delays due to problems related to construction materials as well as the scale of the renovation.

The renovation project has since been scaled down from the original RM113 million to RM73 million, and it is expected to be completed by June next year. The Games are scheduled to be held from Sept 5-14.

The Games, which will involve 27 sports including new events fencing and judo, is the first to be staged by Sabah. A total of 339 gold, 339 silver and 404 bronze medals will be up for grabs.

Asked whether there is adequate budget, Chong said: "The budgets are not finalised yet. Every committee will submit its respective budget requirement before the end of February."

The draw for team events will be held on July 15 while on Aug 1 the state will receive the Sukma torch from Penang, the hosts for the 8th Sukma. It will be handed over by Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.

Sabah Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Sakaran Dandai will open the Games on Sept 7 at the Likas Stadium while Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will close it on Sept 14.

The Games Village at Universiti Malaysia Sabah, near here, would be opened on Sept 5, Chong said.

-- BERNAMA

JS YBY