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Sports-SEA (Promotion)

SEA GAMES PROMOTIONS TO BE INTENSIFIED

KUALA LUMPUR, July 17 (Bernama) -- Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein has promised to step up promotions for the 21st SEA Games this September.

He said many changes in the promotions would be obvious from now.

"By the end of this month, 20 electronic billboards, banners and the likes will be placed in towns where the Games will be held. This assurance has been given by those involved in the promotions," he told reporters after chairing the SEA Games Organising Committee meeting here today.

He said the billboards and banners would be erected at gateways like airports and ports in Penang, Seremban, Port Dickson, Johor Baharu and the Klang Valley. The Games will be held at these places from Sept 8-17.

Asked if he was satisfied with the promotions so far, Hishammuddin said there was room for improvement.

He said the promotions so far were targeted at schoolchildren and people outside the Klang Valley where the Games would be held for the first time.

A total of 27 schools had been identified for "adoption" for the Games and about 11,000 of their students would be given the chance to watch the Games, he said.

Hishammuddin said the sacrifices made by athletes, their responsibility and the nation's expectations on them would be highlighted in the promotions.

Asked on ticket sales, he said the response from foreigners was better than that from the locals.

However, the ministry has certain strategies to boost sales, such as arranging block purchases of tickets for distribution to schoolchildren, he said.

A fund would be launched in August to raise money from the public to buy tickets for distribution to less fortunate groups like the handicapped and the poor, he said.

He said the rehearsal for the torch run from Dataran Merdeka to the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil was held daily to ensure that the torch would arrive at the stadium in good time for the opening ceremony.

Dress rehearsals would be held on Aug 21 and 25 and Sept 4 and 5, he said. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to witness one of the dress rehearsals.

-- BERNAMA

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