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Sports-SEA (Vietnam)
VIETNAM AIM FIFTH POSITION AT SEA GAMES

By: Rozaini Ahmad

HANOI, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- Vietnam are targetting at least a fifth position in the overall placing for the coming 21st SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur next month.

"We hope to win as many medals as possible and we are confident of medal prospects in shooting and martial arts events," said Vietnam's Sports and Physical Culture Minister, Nguyen Danh Thai after the handing over ceremony of the invitation to him and his people to attend the games from Malaysia's special envoy Abdul Latiff Endot, here last night.

Also present was Malaysian Ambassador to Vietnam Datuk Zainal Abidin Zin.

He said Vietnam were very enthusiastic about the Games and would be sending a contingent of 623 people including officials and athletes who would be participating in a total of 24 events.

He said their men's football team were undergoing intensive training in France while their women's football team were in Australia.

On Vietnam's preparation to host the SEA Games in 2003, Thai said they were in the midst of building a new sports complex while upgrading works on their football stadiums and other sporting facilities were underway.

However, he said all athletes and officials for the 2003 Games would be housed at the various hotels near the sporting venues and there were no plans at present to build any athletes' village.

"We are planning to hold 17 sporting events in Hanoi and another 15 events in Ho Chi Minh city," he said.

Thai, who would be in Malaysia for the 21st SEA Games opening ceremony said he hoped to learn as much as possible from Malaysia in preparing to host the Games in 2003 and would also invite experts from Malaysia as well as other countries to assist them.

Meanwhile, Latiff said there was close cooperation between the Malaysian Sports Council and Vietnam, and Malaysia was willing to help them to organise the 22nd SEA Games 2003.

The Rakan Muda Asean Voyage of Friendship 2001 entourage, which is into its tenth day today, will leave for Phnom Penh in Cambodia tomorrow to hand over an official invitation to the Government of Cambodia and its people to attend the SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur.

After Cambodia, the entourage will leave for Bangkok which is the final destination in the northern leg of the voyage and is scheduled to arrive at the Royal Malaysian Air Force base in Subang on Aug 22.

The Voyage was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on July 14.

--BERNAMA

JAI ZS AO