

01 SEP 2002

Sports-Sukma (Karate)

KARATE PROVIDES EARLY RUSH FOR SUKMA GOLD

KOTA KINABALU, Sept 1 (Bernama) -- Competition in the Ninth Malaysia Games 2002 (Sukma 2002) will begin here tomorrow with karate providing an early rush for gold.

The two-day event at the Likas Sports Complex, here, offers 15 gold medals altogether, nine of which are for the men.

Eight gold medals are up for grabs on the first day of the competition, namely the men's kumite in the +80kg, -60kg, -70kg and -55kg categories, women's kumite in the +60kg and -48kg categories as well as individual men's and women's kata.

Seven more gold medals are up for grabs on Tuesday in the men's and women's team kata, men's kumite in the -80kg, -75kg, -65kg categories as well as women's -53kg and -60kg categories.

Host Sabah, Kuala Lumpur and Penang are among the strongest teams in the event.

Sukma 2002 is offering 1,115 medals -- 348 gold, 348 silver and 419 bronze

-- for the 27 sports.

Besides karate, the other sports are football, hockey, fencing, table tennis, basketball, tennis, tenpin bowling, lawn bowl, cycling, shooting, silat, aquatics, sepak takraw, squash, boxing, netball, badminton, weightlifting, gymnastics, sailing, judo, archery, athletics, wushu, golf and taekwondo.

Twenty teams are competing in the Games which will also see participation from the Northern Territory of Australia and Brunei.

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

-- BERNAMA

JS JK