

26 AUG 2002

Sports-Sepaktakraw

SEPAKTAKRAW SQUAD SEEKING FRIENDLY MATCHES BEFORE ASIAD ACTION

KOTA BAHARU, Aug 26 (Bernama) -- The national sepaktakraw squad will probably be involved in a series of friendly matches before leaving for the Asian Games in Busan next month.

Team manager Tengku Adnan Tengku Burhanuddin said the matches had yet to be arranged but would likely be held early next month.

"We are trying to arrange a series of matches with teams like Thailand," he told Bernama here today.

If the effort failed, then the team would settle for friendly matches with local sides taking part in the National Sepaktakraw Grand Prix, said Tengku Adnan.

He said it was important that the national players play a series of friendly matches to gauge their performance before leaving for Busan.

Dr Mahathir said that in the end, it was for the good of the genuine institutions that LAN ensured standards were maintained so that they were free of the bad reputation brought about by the "fly-by-night" operators and their competition for students.

"It may be necessary, at a later stage, to charge for the certificates accorded the genuine institutions," he said.

On another note, Dr Mahathir said that with the need for more people to acquire knowledge, part-time education had become very important and open universities could easily accommodate the irregular time that part-time students needed.

He said that this way, workers could get an opportunity to get better education and qualification while they work.

"Clearly, there is a big role for off-campus distant learning institutions. It will probably become bigger than on-campus university education," he said, adding that it would help produce the knowledge workers so essential for the country's information technology (IT) and knowledge-based industries.

To extend the teaching of Science, Technology and Mathematics to off-campus students, the Prime Minister said that a field that required attention was the development of educational software.

Dr Mahathir said that in the past and even now, books and journals helped to make knowledge available to a bigger number of students but computer educational software would be able to do the job more effectively.

It was imperative, he said, that universities contribute to the teaching and development of software programming skills.

"There is no doubt that the country with the greatest number of software writers and engineers will help in the spread of knowledge. Universities cannot neglect this discipline if they want to be recognised as premier universities," he said.

The OUM is housed in the former Public Services Department Complex in Jalan Tun Ismail and has established 25 learning centres throughout the country.

In addition, it has made English as well as Entrepreneurship and Professional Ethics compulsory subjects.

-- BERNAMA

MAM MAM RM