

29 JAN 2003

Sports-Excellent Sponsorship

EXCELLENT SPONSORSHIP REPLACES PARTNER IN SPORTS

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 29 (Bernama) -- The Partner in Sports (Rakan Sukan) scheme is being replaced with the Excellent Sponsorship programme with the focus on churning out athletes with potential to contribute gold medals at the Olympics and organising various competitions at the grassroots level.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said the Rakan Sukan programme, however, would be continued until the contract between the sponsors and the sports associations concerned expired.

"When their contracts expire, the sponsors can participate in the Excellent Sponsorship programme which is more comprehensive and transparent compared to the Rakan Sukan," he said.

He disclosed this to reporters after witnessing the Excellent Sponsorship agreement signing ceremony for the sponsorship of the Squash Rackets Association of Malaysia (SRAM) between Country View Bhd (Country View), Mulpha International Bhd (Mulpha) and the National Sports Council (NSC), here today.

SRAM was represented by its president Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir, Country View by its chairman Datuk Mohammed Al-Amin Abdul Majid, Mulpha by its director Denis Low and NSC by its Director-General Datuk Wira Mazlan Ahmad.

Hishammuddin said the Rakan Sukan which was introduced in 1995 was found to have numerous problems which had hindered national sports development.

He said among the woes were internal problems of the associations, sponsors facing financial problems due to the economic slowdown, policy change by the sponsoring companies and misunderstanding between the sponsors and associations.

He said his ministry had introduced the Excellent Sponsorship scheme and a programme management committee had been formed to coordinate and monitor it.

He said the committee would comprise a representative from the Sports Commissioner's Office, one from the NSC, three from the national sports associations involved and four representatives from the sponsoring companies.

SRAM is the first sports association in the country to receive sponsorship under the Excellent Sponsorship programme.

Country View will contribute RM300,000 annually up to 2006 while Mulpha will contribute RM2.5 million for a four-year period.

-- BERNAMA

ZAS AZZ AO