

**Malaysia should aim to be overall champion in next SEA Games, says Muhyiddin**  
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Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin wants Malaysia to emerge as the overall champion in the SEA Games 2017 when it hosts the biennial event that year.

He said, the sports development and prestigious training programmes for the country's athletes must be stepped up.

"We (Malaysia) need to intensify our athletes' development programmes from now with increased training. Not just from the government's side, but we also need assistance from the sports associations and sponsors for the training programmes.

"The training programmes will not only be conducted in the country but also abroad. What is important is to increase our athletes' exposure in preparing them to compete at the international level, as what has been done before."

Muhyiddin said after watching the women's Masters bowling competition at the SEA Games in Singapore today.

Accompanied by his wife Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman, Muhyiddin spent nearly half an hour at the Orchid Bowl, Orchid Country Club in Yishun.

He is also scheduled to watch other competitions such as rhythmic gymnastics, badminton, archery and pencak silat.

Muhyiddin said as host of the SEA Games 2017, Malaysia's medal target should be based on the prevailing situation and the athletes' achievements.

"It's not impossible to meet the target set (emerging as overall champion)."

Malaysia was overall champion of the SEA Games 2001 when it hosted the event, winning 111 gold, 98 silver and 86 bronze medals.

In terms of organisation, Muhyiddin said Malaysia could learn from Singapore in setting the best standard or best practice as the future host.

"We cannot show a lower standard than that provided here."

He said the use of digital technology in all the competitions, the venues and facilities for athletes in Singapore is a benchmark for Malaysia as host of the Games in 2017.

Muhyiddin also expressed pride over the Malaysian athletes' achievements at the Games this time, especially among the back-up athletes who excelled and won gold in their events.

"There is still room for our national contingent to win more gold medals due to our athletes' high spirits."

Up to now, Malaysia has won 47 gold medals, including two today through pencak silat and archery. – Bernama, June 14, 2015.

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