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Safety of athletes our priority, says Perlis MB

By AFTAR SINGH

KUALA LUMPUR: The safety of athletes will be the top priority in the 17th edition of the Malaysia Games (Sukma) in Perlis next month.

Perlis will be hosting the Games for the first time from May 24-June 4 and Menteri Besar Azlan Man said that the state wants to ensure that no untoward incident tarnishes the event.

"Our priority is the safety of the athletes. The Royal Malaysian Police will deploy 1,600 personnel at the various venues and hostels for the Games. The Federal Reserve Unit (FRU) and Rela will also help ensure the safety of athletes during the Games," said Azlan, after hosting a dinner for sponsors and the media at a hotel in Putrajaya on Friday.

Last year's Sukma, which was held in Kuala Lumpur, was marred

by a rape case.

Three handball players – Adib Adha Ismail, 18; Mohammad Shaizzad Shafie, 19; and Megat Farzeril Faiz Razali, 19 – have been charged separately in three Sessions Courts with raping a 20-year-old chaperone.

They were charged with raping the woman at about 4am in a room in Enggang Block at Second College, Universiti Putra Malaysia in Serdang on July 4, last year.

The case is still pending.

Azlan also said that except for the aquatic centre, all the venues "are 95% completed and will be ready by the end of this month".

The aquatic centre is expected to be ready by the first week of May.

"The athletes and officials will be

stationed at the UITM campus and also at the state training centres," said Azlan, who added that the state had received a total of RM5.8mil from the sponsors.

The main sponsor Tenaga Nasional, he said, contributed RM3.5mil in kind and cash.

The other sponsors are TM Malaysia, Plus Malaysia, Spritzer, 100Plus, Cima Berhad, Proton and Petronas.

A total of 24 sports will be held in Perlis, with a total of 396 golds, 396 silvers and 473 bronzes up for grabs.

Azlan said that Perlis have set a target of winning 14 gold medals at the Games.

"We will give the athletes incentives for winning medals but I will not reveal the amount," he said.