Mary with officials and athletes after the opening ceremony yesterday.

Sabah IPTs hold sport meet

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KOTA KINABALU: Sporting events for Higher Learning Institutions (IPTs) in the country played a major part in the development of sports.

Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Dr Mary Yap Kain Ching said this in her opening speech at the 2nd Sabah Higher Learning Institution Sports Meet hosted by Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Saturday.

She said the event not only help in the development of Sabah athletes, it also enables new talents to be discovered for national and international duties.

"Events like this will open the door for new talents to a higher level. Take for example, the recent SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur where 264 of the total number of athletes came from IPTs, and 53 of them contributed to the total of 145 gold medals won by the country. Once again the Ministry of Higher Education and I are very proud of this achievement."

She added that the Ministry is committed and will give full cooperation to any such sports organised by any higher learning institutions in Sabah to improve the quality of state institutions sports standard.

"The Ministry will certainly channel funds for this programme to be realized and open up opportunities for Sabah higher learning institutions to participate and make the event more lively."

A total of 767 athletes from 20 institutions in the State are taking part in the two-day event where UMS are the defending overall champion for the Datuk Dr Mary Yap Kain Ching Challenge Trophy.

Meanwhile, UMS Vice Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr D Kamarudin D Mudin said the involvement of IPT students in sports competitions at both national and international levels is a positive sign and a great contribution to their respective institutions, states and country with the successes.

He also said the key to success of staging the event depends on the IPTs and those involved, especially Higher Education Ministry and the Youth and Sports Ministry.