

Stepping stone to sporting excellence

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KOTA KINABALU: Datuk Tawfiq Abu Bakar Titingan insists that the Higher Learning Institutions should not be a place where athletes end their sporting career, but instead a place where they can pursue their sporting dreams to the highest level.

The Youth and Sports Minister said higher learning institutions are the right avenue for athletes not only to chase academic dreams, but also sporting events.

Furthermore, he said athletes, who are good academically, can use their intelligence to be successful in sports.

"In this era, we need athletes who know how to think and use their intelligence, and not only depend on tactical, technical or strength aspects. For that reason, we need the higher learning institutions to produce athletes who we can depend on at the international level scene," said Tawfiq.

He said this when he officially launched the 3rd Borneo Undergraduates Games (Sukmab) at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah here yesterday.

Tawfiq said they should be proud of what Pandalela Renong from Sarawak has achieved at the London Olympic Games where she won

the bronze medal in the diving event.

He said students' involvement in the international level scene is a big contribution in making the nation proud.

So, Tawfiq added, the higher learning institutions should not be a grave for athletes in their search for sporting glory.

Commenting on Sukmab, Tawfiq said that this will present the students the opportunity to show their prowess and expertise in other areas, in this case sports.

He added that the Games is also an excellent way to promote unity among the students.

"Sports events are one of the ways to uphold unity and foster ties between neighbouring states or countries. Through this, we not only share borders but also a common interest for all," he said.

Meanwhile, UMS Vice Chancellor, Prof. Datuk Dr. Harun Abdullah said Sukmab is being held once biennially.

He said it presents athletes from higher learning institutions from throughout Borneo to compete against each other in sporting events.

Dr Harun added that Sukmab made its debut in 2009, which UMS hosted before Sarawak played host in 2011.

This edition of the Games that ends on



LET THE GAMES BEGIN ... Tawfiq, third left, and Dr Harun, second right, seen at the launching of the Games yesterday.

August 22 sees more than 1,000 athletes and officials representing 27 contingents, including three from Brunei namely Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Universiti Islam Sultan Sarif Ali and Kolej Universiti Perguruan Ugama Seri

Begawan as well as Universitas Tanjung Pura from Kalimantan.

It features seven sporting disciplines namely futsal, beach volleyball, volleyball, sepak-takraw, table tennis, pentanque and chess.