

# A more level playing field this year

**WITH** the introduction of eight new disciplines this year a much more balanced competition can be expected in the second edition of the Malaysian Institutions of Higher Learning Games (Sukipt) which starts on Monday.

The addition of pencak silat, squash, fencing, judo, petanque, woodball, softball and lawn bowls to the Games, which will mostly be held at venues in Shah Alam on Feb 3-12, should give other universities a fighting chance to challenge defending champions Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) for the overall title.

Higher Education Sector sports division secretary Hazally Jali said he expects UPM and Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) to again be among the front runners but did not rule out other teams giving them a



Higher Education Sector sports division secretary Hazally Jali (fourth from left) with the sponsors and the mascots at the media briefing for SUKIPT 2014 yesterday. Pic by Hasriyasyah Sabudin



run for their money.

“There is no denying that UPM is very strong as a lot of our national athletes are from there but we do not want one team dominating everything,” said Hazally at the tournament media briefing in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

“We are hoping that these additions will make it a more interesting com-

petition and give other teams a chance to challenge for honours.

“Besides them (UPM) I think Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and UiTM, who will be hosting it this time, will also be up there.

“At the moment it is hard to judge the others but there is always a chance for them with this change.”

Hazally added that security will also be a key priority for the Education Ministry as they want to ensure that the rape incident that marred the Malaysia Games last year does not occur again.

The other sports are — swimming, athletics, volleyball, beach volleyball, taekwondo, rugby sevens, karate, tenpin bowling, shooting, archery, netball, sepak takraw, tennis, badminton, chess. **By Fadhli Ishak**