

SUKIPT GAMES

Athletes on the rise

IMPROVEMENT: Higher Education Ministry happy with progress shown by teams

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THE Higher Education Ministry is pleased with the continued improvement shown by athletes and their respective institutions at the third edition of the Malaysian Institutions of Higher Learning Games (Sukipt) which ended in Johor Baru yesterday.

Sukipt chief executive officer Hazally Jali said the 37 Games records bettered in swimming and athletics and medals being spread out more evenly proved Sukipt is slowly but surely achieving its goal of encouraging sporting excellence amongst Malaysian students.

Though 46 Games records were bettered in the pool when the Games was in its infancy in 2014, swimmers managed to raise the benchmark in 14 events this year while 25 new records were set in athletics compared to 15 two years ago.

"This year, there is clear improvement among private institutions

and also polytechnics', which shows they have been taking the competition more seriously by scouting for students talented in sports and preparing them well for the Games," said Hazally.

"One clear example is Sunway University, who have done very well in swimming this time (14 gold) while a lot of other institutions have managed to win at least a few gold each.

"In addition to allowing a few foreign universities from the Southeast Asian region to compete this time (on invitation basis), this shows the standard of the competition is continuing to rise."

Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) successfully defended their overall title, though with a reduced haul of 53 gold, 46 silver and 35 bronze compared to the 64-44-34 they managed two years ago.

Inaugural edition winners Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) came in second on 41-19-21 while Universiti Malaya (25-17-14) and Sunway University (17-17-15) finished third and fourth respectively.

A total 29 institutions from the 102 that competed managed to win two



The UiTM contingent celebrate with the Sukipt title in Johor Baru yesterday. Pic by Hairul Anuar Rahim

or more medals his year.

Swimmers Chan Jie (Sunway), who won four gold and three bronze, and Irene Chong (UM) who won 4-1-2 in the pool in addition to a silver in the cross country mountain bike event, were named the male and female athletes of the Games.

Hazally added that Sukipt, which was held in the Klang Valley in 2012 and 2013, is likely to head up north for the fourth edition in 2018.

"This is the first time we have brought the Games outside of the Klang Valley and although we expected it to be a learning curve for us, I believe Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) have done an excellent job.

"We are likely to move up (north) in 2018 to give other regions a chance to host the Games."

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Hazally Jali
Sukipt chief executive officer

The final day of competition saw UiTM's Eryn Meza M. Hamzah and M. Arif Busheri defeating UPM's Shahira Abd Halim-Nazir Omar 5-1 in the mixed team recurve archery final.

UPM's Saritha Cham Nong-M.

Faris Haziq Shuhaimi defeated UTM's Nur Sazatul Nadhirah Zakaria-M. Izham Haniff Ismael 12-5 in the mixed compound final while Politeknik Kedah and UiTM emerged victorious in the men's and women's softball events.