

Games participants glad none was hurt

KUALA TERENGGANU: Relief was the order of the day for more than 3,000 participants of the Malaysian Inter Varsity Staff Games which began yesterday at Universiti Malaysia Terengganu.

During registration at the university's Dewan Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin in Mengabang Telipot, most of the participants expressed shock over the collapsed roof of the stadium.

The stadium was one of the eight venues for the 11-day games.

But the competitors also thanked their lucky stars that the roof did not cave in when they were competing in bowling and athletics events at the stadium.

Universiti Putra Malaysia secretariat head Zaharah Abdullah, 46, said it was hard to believe that such a magnificent and newly-built stadium was now in ruins.

"I was here to inspect the stadium a few months ago and I remember being impressed with the facilities. I also could not wait for the rest of our con-

tingent of 265 faculty staff to take a look at the place.

"Now all I can think of is how lucky I am as I was supposed to have trained for my shot putt event on that afternoon," she said.

Universiti Malaysia Perlis bowling team manager Mohd Safrizaul Baha Abu Bakar, 27, was equally relieved as he and his teammates were scheduled to practise at the stadium's bowling alley on Tuesday.

"We would have probably not been in any direct danger as the bowling alley is inside the main stadium building."

Meanwhile, organising committee chairman professor Dr Abd Majid Mohd Isa, 50, said the stadium was supposed to have been one of the attractions of the games, hosted for the first time in the state.

"The stadium was also one of the reasons we managed to convince the committee to allow us to become the host and we were looking forward to showing off the stadium to the visiting teams."