



Malaysia emerged the overall champions at the Deputy Prime Minister's International Pencak Silat Cup in Batu Pahat yesterday.

Early boost to AUG hopes

WITH less than four months to go to the Laos Asean University Games (AUG), Malaysian silat exponents sent a clear warning to their rivals when they dominated proceedings on the final day of competition to clinch the overall champions title at the Deputy Prime Minister's International Pencak Silat Cup at the Square One Mall in Batu Pahat yesterday.

Malaysia emerged champions of the international category with a haul of 14 gold, three silver and five bronze medals with Singapore second with 5-9-3 and Vietnam third (2-3-2).

Malaysia team manager Azli Buddin said he was delighted with the victory, which he considered a huge boost for the exponents ahead of the AUG.

"This victory is the result of all the hard work and systematic planning our exponents and coaches have put in since the beginning of the year," said Azli, who is also the tournament director.

"We, however, cannot afford to rest on our laurels and will keep working hard in preparation for the Games."

Azli, who is also the Malaysian AUG silat team manager, said a number of talented new exponents had been identified from the tournament and have been shortlisted for the 28-member AUG squad.

The Malaysian team at the Pencak Silat Cup were represented by exponents from the Malaysian Universities Silat Focus Centre based in Universiti Tun Hussein Onn's Johor campus.

"Quite a number of the exponents from our local category impressed us during the tournament and we will likely include at least three in the AUG squad."

Malaysia's Mohd Faizul Nasir and Siti Zubaidah Che Omar were picked as the top man and woman exponent respectively in the international category



respectively.

Meanwhile, the local universities category saw Universiti Teknologi Mara emerge overall champions with eight gold, one silver and three bronze. Second were Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (4-2-4) with Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (3-3-2) third. **By Fadhli Ishak**