

Headline	Kedah launch programme to recruit talents at grassroots level		
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Kedah launch programme to recruit talents at grassroots level

THE National Sports Council (NSC) has launched a Talent Spot programme for Kedah at the Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) mini stadium in Sintok.

Its director-general Datuk Seri Zolkiples Embong said Kedah was the seventh state to adopt the programme after Perak, Perlis, Johor, Sabah, Negri Sembilan and

Kelantan, adding that the programme financed by the NSC was intended to unearth talents at a young age to be developed into champions.

"The population of our nation is small compared to other countries

like Indonesia, China, the United States and India.

"To come by potential champions in the mould of Lee Chong Wei (badminton), Nicol David (squash), Khairul Annuar Mohamad (archery), Pandalela Rinong (diving) and Azizol Hasni Awang (cycling) is rare indeed.

"So we have to take the trouble to go down to the grassroots level to identify talents to be nurtured into champions. The talented ones will

be given systematic training incorporating sports science elements as part and parcel of their training.

"Initially, we only chose athletics,

archery and *sepak takraw* but will now include other sports when the programme is reviewed in a few years," he said after launching the programme on Saturday.

A total of 358 young athletes (140 in track & field, 128 in *sepak takraw* and 90 in archery) attended the two-day programme under qualified coaches who will identify the talented ones to be roped in for training and competition.

Zolkiples said that for an athlete to fully develop his talents, he or she must participate in at least 25 to 30 competitions annually.