



Headline	MHC up prize money to make MHL 'more interesting'		
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KUALA LUMPUR: The total prize money for the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL), which begins on March 22, has been raised to RM487,000 an increase of RM77,000 from last year. Malaysian Hockey Confederation (MHC) competitions committee chairman M. Gobinathan, who chaired the team managers meeting yesterday, said the increased prize money will make the seven-week league more competitive and interesting. Kuala Lumpur Hockey Club (KLHC), powered by six foreign players, will be gunning for their third consecutive double league and overall titles. The other teams in the Premier Division are Tenaga Nasional, Sapura, Maybank, Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL), Nur Insafi and debutants Terengganu. Seven teams will feature in Division One. They are Tunku Mahkota Ismail Sports School (SSTMI), Bukit Jalil Sports School (BJSS), Uniten-KPT, UiTM, Thunderbolt, Sunday 2030 club and Ipoh City Hall. Both the Premier Division and Division One matches will be played on a home-and-away basis. After the completion of the league matches, the top four teams in each division will compete for their own overall titles, said Gobinathan, who is also the MHC vice-president. While the top four teams from the Premier Division compete for the TNB Cup, the top four from Division One will vie for the Presidents Cup. The prize money for winning the Premier Division is RM70,000. The runners-up and third-placed teams will get RM50,000 and RM40,000 respectively. The winners of the TNB Cup will receive RM70,000. The runners-up will pocket RM50,000 while the third and fourth-placed teams will get RM40,000 and RM30,000 respectively. The Division One champions will receive RM30,000, the runners-up RM20,000 and third-placed team RM10,000. The winners of the Presidents Cup will take home RM30,000. The runners-up will get RM20,000 while the third and fourth-placed teams will receive RM10,000 and RM5,000. The team that win the fairplay award will earn RM4,000. There are also four individual prize money for the best player of the league, top scorer, best goalkeeper and man of the match in the final. They are worth RM2,000 each. Gobinathan said that demerit points collected by players in the league matches would not be carried into the knockout stage this season. Each team will play 12 league matches and they need the services of all the players to give their best in the knockout stage, added Gobinathan. Meanwhile, the competitions committee have decided to stage the Charity Shield match between defending champions KLHC and league runners-up Tenaga Nasional at the National Hockey Stadium pitch 2 in Bukit Jalil at 8pm on March 24.