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Terengganu await MHC's decision on eligibility to play in Premier Division

By S. RAMAGURU

KUALA LUMPUR: Debutants Terengganu Hockey Team will have to wait until Feb 18 to know if they can compete in the Premier Division of the Malaysia Hockey League (MHL).

The team, who are supposed to play in Division One, have recruited several international players and applied to the competitions committee to feature in the elite group.

The competitions committee, who met on Wednesday, have decided to see their team list first before making a final decision.

Malaysian Hockey Confederation (MHC) secretary Johari Abdul Aziz said yesterday that the committee felt that there was a need to check on the players' status to ensure that they are up to mark to play in the higher division.

"Yes, there have been occasions when we had 'promoted' new teams. But I must stress that those decisions were based on the teams' strength and the players listed in their squads. For now, none of the 14 teams who have entered for the new season have submitted their

team lists.

"So, we'll check out the Terengganu list first before making a decision," he said.

A total of 14 teams will be in action in the new season, which starts on March 22.

Six teams are confirmed for the Premier Division. They are KL Hockey Club, Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL), Maybank, Tenaga Nasional, Sapura and Nur Insafi.

The teams down to play in Division One are Uniten-KPT, UiTM, BJSS, Thunderbolt, SSTMI Juniors, Sunday 2030 and Ipoh City Council.

Meanwhile, the first Test match between Ireland and Malaysia will be played at the National Hockey Stadium in Bukit Jalil at 7pm today.

The second Test (tomorrow) and the third Test (Wednesday) will be held at the same time and venue.

Malaysia are using the Test to fine-tune their selection for the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup, which will be held in Ipoh next month.