

UNSPAPY



**PRIME MINISTER**

FOR MEDIA

18 May 1984

Plans to stage the first Australia Games in Melbourne next January were announced jointly today by the Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke, and the Premier of Victoria, Mr. John Cain.

The Games are expected to cost just over \$2 million.

Mr. Hawke said the Australian Government, in honouring its 1983 election commitment, would provide \$800,000 and the Victorian Government had agreed to a grant of \$375,000.

The balance of the funds would be raised by the Australia Games Foundation from marketing and television sponsorship.

The 1985 Australia Games will coincide with Victoria's 150th birthday celebrations.

Mr. Hawke said the Australia Games would provide a much needed national focus for sport in Australia and facilitate regular high-level competition for Australia's top athletes in their own country.

He said the Games would act as the major catalyst in promoting the benefits of increased participation and involvement in sport and would encourage States to upgrade and provide sporting facilities of international standard.

The valuable experience gained from staging the Australia Games would improve Australia's chances of hosting other major international sporting events.

Mr. Hawke said he hoped other States would follow Victoria's lead and offer to stage the Games in future years, with a major effort in 1988, the bicentennial year.