

03 JUN 1997

Everest-Reward

ALL NATIONAL MOUNTAINEERS TO RECEIVE RM20,000 EACH

KUALA LUMPUR, June 3 (Bernama) -- Two national mountaineers M.Magendran and N.Mohandas will receive a reward of RM50,000 each for planting Malaysia's flag on the summit of the world's highest mountain -- Mt Everest.

Of the amount, RM30,000 was bonus and RM20,000 was for their participation in the 23-member Malaysian Mt Everest expedition.

This was announced by Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin at a lunch in the mountaineers' honour at a hotel here in the presence of Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

Muhyiddin also announced that each expedition member would receive RM20,000. The team comprises 10 climbers and 13 support members.

He also said expedition head Nor Ramllee Sulaiman and mountaineers head Major Rizan Mat Hassan and two other mountaineers Mohd Fauzan Hassan and Gary Chong would receive RM20,000 bonus each. This meant all four would receive RM40,000 each.

Muhyiddin said the reward would be given as soon as possible.

Earlier when receiving members of the expedition at his office, the Acting Prime Minister said apart from the monetary reward they would also be conferred awards by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar on the occasion of his official birthday on Saturday.

Anwar said the rewards and the royal awards were agreed upon during the Cabinet meeting last week. The government would however have to get the consent of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Anwar also received the Malaysian flag which was hoisted on the summit of Mt Everest from Nor Ramlie.

The Malaysian flag and pieces of rock from the summit of Mt Everest which the team brought back would be placed at the National Museum.

Anwar said the government would ensure that the team spirit in sports and mountain climbing as a recreation would continue.

The Acting Prime Minister congratulated the team and said he was proud of the Malaysians' achievement which gave credence to the slogan: "Kita boleh, Malaysia boleh."

He also conveyed to members of the expedition, felicitations of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali.

"Dr Mahathir and his wife have been much concerned about the welfare of the mountaineers and have been phoning me to know about the latest developments," he said.

Anwar said Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah felt that reaching the summit was no small matter and hence it was appropriate for the government to give due recognition.

Speaking at the dinner, Anwar said the Mt Everest expedition members would be given the opportunity to travel throughout the country to tell about their experience to the people particularly youth.

"I have discussed this with Tan Sri Muhyiddin and also the mountains we will climb in this country...do not belittle our efforts," he said.

Anwar thanked Telekom Malaysia, RTM and the mass media for giving wide publicity to the mountaineers.

At the function, Umno Youth presented a plaque to each of the climbers.

-- BERNAMA

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