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Mahathir-Cycling

MAHATHIR LAUNCHES TOUR DE LANGKAWI

KOTA KINABALU, Feb 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today launched the Tour de Langkawi here and paid tribute to the private sector for sponsoring the premier cycling event.

Dr Mahathir said he was very glad and grateful that the various companies in the country have responded very generously in sponsoring the event which entered its second year this time.

"I would like to thank very much the splendid donors for their generosity for giving the money that is needed to organise this race," he said adding that such a world-class cycling event would help put Malaysia on the map.

He said with the private sector's help, the prize money for the event this year had been increased to RM1.2 million from RM1 million last year.

The Prime Minister also praised the various companies, which donated and pledged some RM10 million to the organiser today, for their sponsorship without expecting something in return.

Among the donors are Malaysia Electrical Company (MEC) which donated RM3 million, Gamuda (RM1 million), DRB-Hicom (RM500,000), G.S.Gill (RM500,000) and P.T.Sampoerna (RM400,000).

Dr Mahathir said their donations were exceptional because the donors would not profit from it unlike in the Olympics or Commonwealth Games where donors get television rights for their sponsorship.

A total of 150 cyclists would take part in the event, the world's third richest cycling event after Tour de France and Tour de Italy, which would be flagged off by state Tourism and Environment Minister Datuk Bernard Dompok tomorrow. -- BERNAMA

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