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Mahathir: Let's aim high

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said Malaysians should not be afraid to set high targets as they have proven they can rival the best.

He said Malaysians were able to take on the best and should not regard themselves inferior to others.

"We have achieved success in many fields. The latest being our success in scaling Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this before flagging off the 2nd Asian Rally at Dataran Merdeka tonight.

Also present were Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Land and Co-operative Development Minister Datuk Osu Sukam. Osu is also president of the Motoring Association of Malaysia.

A total of 75 cars, representing 50 teams are taking part in the rally which ends in Bangkok next Saturday.

Also put on display was the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's challenge trophy.

One-hundred and thirty two participants from the United States, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Australia and Malaysia are taking part in the event.

While referring to the world's largest leather drum which was put on display at the flagging off, Dr Mahathir said Malaysians who have high ambitions should go all out to achieve results.

"Even the world's biggest drum, which has great sound, has plenty of empty air.

"We should not be like that. We should aspire to achieve our targets," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the people should be proud of the fact that Malaysians had reached the Everest peak.

"We again congratulate those who had put in unrelenting efforts and preparations to scale Everest. Some of them even lost their toes but never gave up," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was also probably the first time a team from a tropical region had managed to scale the world's highest peak.

"We live in a tropical region. Some of us have not even seen ice except in the refrigerator, but yet we were successful," he said.

Dr Mahathir said setting high targets was not showing off.

"It is a way to boost our confidence. This way we can be successful in many other fields.

"It is just another way of saying Malaysia Boleh," he said.

He said it was his hope to see a larger participation in the rally in future.

"It is also my hope that the distance of the rally be increased. I was told by Muhyiddin (Tan Sri) that there are big plans to have a rally from here to Beijing.

"That is a long distance. Maybe we can first get to Cambodia, Laos or Vietnam. We will move ahead little by little until we reach Kunming and then Beijing," he said.

He said that at the same time, efforts should also be made to find new routes to these destinations.

Dr Mahathir later congratulated the organisers of the event and wished the participants success.

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