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RM1.3 million on offer

Joniston Bangkuai

ENCOURAGED by the tremendous success of the Tour de Langkawi, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has suggested that the prize money be increased by RM300,000 from the present RM1 million.

Launching the Tour in Kota Kinabalu yesterday, Dr Mahathir said on the scale the Tour de Langkawi is being organised it is certainly something quite unique, although cycle racing is not new in Malaysia.

"Because it is quite unique we think that we should offer good prize money," he said.

Dr Mahathir indicated that if the race continued to receive encouraging participation, the prize money would be increased again next year.

He also announced that RM100,000 will be set aside as prize money for Asian riders.

"It's a fact that Asians are physically smaller than the Europeans and Africans and we hope that this special prize will encourage them to excel."

Describing the inaugural Tour as a success, the Prime Minister expressed optimism that this year's event will receive the same kind of attention.

The race last year attracted a lot of attention from all over the world and it was fully covered in cycling magazines in Europe and elsewhere.

Dr Mahathir said the decision to expand the tour to Sabah and Sarawak was prompted by the interest shown by so many people.

He said the organisers have to rely on sponsorship as the Tour was not a money making event.

Thanking the sponsors, Dr Mahathir said the only way to make the race a success is by way of donations from people who are interested to promote it and help put Malaysia on the world map.

The Prime Minister also thanked organisations and individuals in making the event a success.

The sponsors - RM3,000,000: Datuk Andrew Leong (Malaysia Electric Corporation).

RM1,000,000: Lai Hee Kuang (O'Seekers - Nature's Own); Datuk Lin Yun Ling (Gamuda).

RM500,000: Datuk Salleh Sulong (DRB-Hicom Group).

RM400,000: Oon Sim Hor (PT Sampoerna).

RM300,000: Jen (R) Tan Sri Borhan Ahmad (Ekovest); Datuk Amain Shah (Business Focus); Tan Sri Tan Kok Ping (Cerah Bakti); Tan Sri Tan Kok Ping (Cosway); Tan Sri Tan Kok Ping (Sports Toto); Datuk Mohan Swami (Chase Perdana); Tan Sri Ting Pek Khing (Ekran); Datuk Seri N.T. Rajah (Resorts World); Datuk Mohamed Basir (Maybank Group); Tommy Chang (Sabah Forest Industries); Edward Ong (Sutera Harbour Resort); Dr Razali Harun (Telekom Malaysia).

RM200,000: Ikmal Hijaz Hashim (PLUS); Sulong Junaidi (Sugar Bun Services); Bistaman Siru (Taiping Consolidated).

RM100,000: Chan Chong Lam (Chocolate Products); Zain Shahrer Amim (Denko Industrial Group); Ikmal Hijaz Hashim (UEM); Ishak Imam Abas (Petronas).

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