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Soldier pledges to run from Padang Besar to KL

PADANG BESAR, Mon. - A 42-year-old soldier has pledged to run from this northernmost border town to Kuala Lumpur, a distance exceeding 500km, in conjunction with the 40th National Day.

Nasir Abas, of the Six Workshop Brigade at the Sungai Petani Camp in Kedah, made the pledge at the start of the northern leg of the nationwide Flag Run near the checkpoint today.

"I'm determined to make it. I've been running 30km daily over the past two weeks to prepare for this.

"This is also my final year in the military service and I thought I should do something which I can look back to with pride," he said.

Starting the run with him were about 500 other participants.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Ong Ka Ting, who flagged them off, said 50,000 Malaysians would be taking part in the run covering 4,600km. He said the first leg began on Aug 5 in Tawau, Sabah.

"The runners have now entered Sarawak and they will eventually hand over the flag to runners from Johor," he added.

He said both the Rantau Panjang, Kelantan and Padang Besar legs began simultaneously today.

Ong said the flags would be handed over to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Aug 31 midnight at Dataran Merdeka in Kuala Lumpur.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, who was at the function, said about 2,000 Perlis residents took part in today's run to the southern border town of Sanglang.

State Tourism Committee chairman Yazid Mat handed over the flag to Kedah State Assembly Speaker Datuk Zainol Mohamad Isa at the border.

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