

04/05/1998

A display of single-minded purpose

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Thousands of Commonwealth Games 98 volunteers gathered at the Mines Exhibition Hall early today to hear Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad deliver his address.

They came from all over the country, some with the whole family in tow.

Waving flags and banners, they were from all walks of life but every single one of them had the same mission - to make the Games an event the nation can be proud of.

"I am ready to do whatever I can for the Games," said volunteer S. Ponnudurai, who together with two other friends had volunteered out of a "love for the country and sports".

Ponnudurai, a technician, has been put in charge of cleanliness.

Azizah Abdul Aziz brought her three-year-old daughter, Mazian Abu Bakar, so that the child could get a feel of the spirit of camaraderie shared by volunteers.

"She was so excited that she woke up on her own this morning," Azizah said, laughing.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia student Loh Mei Fun volunteered because she felt it would be a learning experience.

"And I have met so many people during the course of activities organised for us ... we have become very good friends," said Loh, who brought her husband along to hear the Prime Minister's address.

Dr Mahathir also launched the Kuala Lumpur 98 Souvenir Card and volunteers' apparel today. Both received tremendous response from the volunteers.

The apparel for volunteers is specially designed by Pro-specs. Each volunteer will receive T-shirts, a track suit, sports shoes and a bag.

A booth was set up by Pro-specs outside the hall to show volunteers the various types of apparel.

A poster explaining the meaning of the design and colours was also put up.

The colours on the T-shirt and track suit - red, blue, yellow, green and purple - denotes the section a volunteer will be working under.

Zainol Ekhwan, one of the designers, said the patterns on the T-shirts and tracksuits were based on the butterfly.

"The Games are like a butterfly. We are seeing it through stage by stage, from the beginning until the end.

"The butterfly is the same as it goes through its life in stages.

"It starts off in a cocoon and later blossoms into something beautiful."

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