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All set for the grand opening

Jugjet Singh

IT was chaotic outside the Bukit Jalil Sports Complex amid the strong smell of wet paint with workers frantically trying to get the main stadium ready for the official opening tonight.

But that was only on the surface.

The launch of the RM1.2 billion complex by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight has been meticulously planned and rehearsed.

"The 100,000 free tickets have been distributed and the owners of the Light Rail Transit have agreed to offer free rides to all who want to catch the historic moment," said event promoter Dr Kay Mohamed in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

"Right now our fear is an overwhelming response and those without tickets turning up at the Stadium."

At the moment, there are no big screens outside the main stadium, so those who make the trip without tickets will be left with nothing to watch.

However, the Pre-Games carnival begins as early as 10am with various activities lined up within the vicinity of the Bukit Jalil Sports Complex.

The events will be on throughout the day until the main event begins at 5.0pm.

No tickets are needed for the carnival.

During the Opening Ceremony, Dr Mahathir will officially name the main stadium and the rest of the facilities around the complex.

Before the opening, Dr Mahathir will inaugurate the LRT service from the Bukit Jalil Station to downtown Kuala Lumpur, and launch 400 Petronas taxis which will be used during the Games proper on Sept 11-21.

Bowler Shalin Zulkifli will have the honour of handing over the torch to the Prime Minister who will then light the cauldron to mark the opening of the complex.

Some of the top local entertainers such as M. Nasir, Ziana Zain and Erra Fazira will be performing.

Also on stage will be Indian singer Sudesh Boshle.

* PERUSAHAAN Otomobil Elektrik Malaysia (POEM), Malaysia's electric car manufacturer, will hand over 50 cars called the Elektriksuria to Games organisers Sukom at the opening today.

(END)