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PM: Malaysians are ready to dare

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The launch of the Malaysian Book of Records shows that Malaysians are willing to face challenges thrown their way, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Dr Mahathir said the contents of the book described feats achieved by Malaysians which would otherwise have gone unnoticed.

"The records reflect the dedication of the men and women who braved all odds to realise the spirit of Malaysia Boleh," he said in his message at the launch of the inaugural edition of the Malaysia Book of Records at Dewan Wawasan, Menara PGRM in Cheras.

He was represented by Information Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Rahmat.

Also present were Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, MBR founder Danny Ooi and some of the 1998 MBR record holders.

The MBR Awards Nite '98 also featured two live crossover telecasts of record-setting attempts.

Stuntman Saharuddin Yusof abseiled 319 metres from Menara Kuala Lumpur, Asia's tallest and the world's fourth tallest communications tower, while at the Menara PGRM foyer, L. Jayabarathy, 14, pulled two vans containing 18 passengers with her hair.

Saharuddin descended a kemantel static rope made of nylon and patalon, wearing a safety harness, with an extra safety-rope as well as reflectors on his overall.

The nationwide search for record holders and breakers has so far resulted in 1,300 new achievements.

Among those present were Mah Hassan (the country's first blind lawyer), Ho Sun Foo (tallest man), Omar Abbas (oldest man at 141 years), Sapok Biki (the first Malaysian boxer to win a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games); P. Letchemanah (the country's strongest man), Saharuddin Yusof (the first person to abseil the KL Tower) and Sharifah Aini (longest resident artiste).

Companies which are mentioned in the MBR include Binariang Maxis (first satellite), A' Famosa Resort Bhd (largest water theme park), Automobile Association of Malaysia (largest road rescue organisation), Boh Plantations Sdn Bhd (largest tea producer), Edaran Otomobil Nasional (largest convoy of a single make), ICI Paint (M) Sdn Bhd (largest paint manufacturer), Great Eastern Life Assurance Co Ltd (oldest and largest life insurance company), Nestle Products (biggest food manufacturer) and Sri Malaysia Hotels (largest hotel chain).

Dr Mahathir said: "These achievements not only reflect our will to grow, our spirit to fight and our strength to improve, but also the true grit of all Malaysians to face challenges thrown in our paths.

"In any endeavour, thresholds and hurdles must be surmounted."

Dr Mahathir also congratulated the producer of the book, R & D Communications Sdn Bhd for its determination and perseverance in compiling the achievements.

"I understand that this is just the start. So long as we continue to strive, the MBR will be there to compile and update our achievements to be presented to the future generations.

"The MBR is the answer to the Government's call towards nation building and to strive towards a developed nation status."

Eleven categories are featured in the MBR inaugural edition - human achievements; buildings and structures; business world, human beings;

human world; living world; nature; science and technology; transport; arts and entertainment and sports and games.

In his speech, Mohamed Rahmat said while the Government had set forth its vision, it was only appropriate that the people reciprocate and complement this effort by demonstrating their commitment in nation building.

He said the 300-page book, which costs RM78, was a good investment.

Ooi said he had received many criticisms when he first decided to embark on the mission.

"A friend of mine even said I was out of my mind. But with support from the record breakers, my patience and perseverance are finally paying off."

He said he hoped to double the number of entries in the next edition which will be produced in the year 2000.

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