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Commonwealth-ceremonies

CLOSED-DOOR AFFAIR FOR COMMONWEALTH GAMES DRESS REHEARSALS

KUALA LUMPUR, April 25 (Bernama) -- The two dress rehearsals for the multi-million ringgit opening and closing ceremonies of the 16th Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games here on September will be closed to the public, said Minister of Youth and Sports Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin here today.

He said the first rehearsal on Sept 6 will only be witnessed by selected people including Cabinet ministers while and the second on Sept 9 would be witnessed by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Both the ceremonies, which cost about RM25 million, will be held at the 100,000 capacity main stadium at Bukit Jalil. The Games is scheduled from Sept 11 to 21.

Muhyiddin said the dress rehearsals would be closed-door affairs so that the public will have an element of surprise at both the ceremonies.

"The ceremonies will be historical events. Malaysians should not miss the exciting shows which will have local technology and expertise, light and sound and other effects," he told reporters after hearing a briefing from the Sukom Opening and Closing Ceremonies Committee here.

Sukom Ninety Eight Berhad, the organisers of the Games, would sell about 60,000 tickets each for the opening and closing ceremonies, said Muhyiddin.

He said each spectator at the stadium would be given a bag of goodies that would include flash-lights, ribbons and other things that would allow them to join in the sing-along sessions and other interesting activities.

"We want the spectators to blend themselves into the ceremonies...not just sit there and watch. I'm sure each spectator will leave the stadium with fond memories," he added.

Muhyiddin said the military precision movements during the various events lined up coupled with light and sound special effects, international singers and the theme show "Aur di Tebing" (which symbolises unity and strength) would be a legacy of the Games.

The "Aur di Tebing" show, a musical performance, would depict Malaysian historical events such as the independence, and other aspects of local life like the multi-racial culture and unity. The show would last about 45 minutes.

He said the entire opening ceremony would last two-and-a-half-hours and would be put up by 13,000 people.

The opening ceremony on Sept 11 will be graced by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Jaafar, while the closing ceremony on Sept 21 will be officiated by Queen Elizabeth, the head of the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) President, Prince Edward, will read the Queen's message contained in the baton.

On the international artistes' performance at the closing ceremony, Muhyiddin said, among the cast that the organisers are talking to are British pop star, Rod Stewart, Indian star Alisha and Ireland's all-female group Corr.

"Our local artistes will also join the international cast," he said.

On schoolchildren involved in the ceremonies, Muhyiddin said they would be from schools in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Johor. -- Bernama

DC DSR