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Malaysians urged to treasure peace and harmony

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Everyone in the country - Malaysians and foreigners - must treasure the peace and harmony the nation continues to enjoy, social worker Datuk Robert M.S. Phang said today.

He said everyone must hold fast to these if they did not want to see panic, chaos, fear and threat to public order and national security.

Phang was among 66 persons who placed a full-page advertisement in the New Straits Times and Berita Harian today congratulating the participants, organisers and volunteers of the 16th Commonwealth Games Kuala Lumpur '98, and pledging support for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Phang said all 66 persons were from Sabah and the Federal Territory of Labuan and indicated that there could be more such advertisements of support.

He said he was moved by the success of the Games and recent developments following the economic problems and sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as Deputy Prime Minister and Umno deputy president to place such an advertisement.

He said people did not want a situation similar to what happened in Indonesia where there were riots and looting during the days before Suharto stepped down.

In an interview today, he said it was necessary to have only one leader at the helm to steer the country to economic recovery.

Phang said Dr Mahathir had a proven track record and deserved the support of the people to get the country out of the economic problems it was experiencing.

"A boat can have only one captain. Under the present scenario everyone will ask who is the better leader and would definitely go for one who has a proven track record.

"I am fully confident the Prime Minister would lead us to economic recovery once again and get us back to the realisation of Vision 2020. Trust him," he said.

Phang said everyone must remain calm and let the sequence of events take place for truth to prevail.

The idea to come up with the advertisement was collective and payment was shared by the 66.

In Kota Kinabalu, a member of the group, Justice of Peace and former Federal Deputy Minister Datuk Kalakau Untol, said the organisation of Kuala Lumpur '98 was acknowledged worldwide to be the best ever in the history of the Games.

Untol, who is Parti Demokratik Sabah Youth leader, said the spectacular success of the Games proved to the world that the country lived up to its popular slogan "Malaysia Boleh".

Another member of the group, Justice of Peace C.C. Pung said they were unanimous in showing their undivided support to the Prime Minister for his guidance in making Kuala Lumpur '98 a great success.

"I have never been so happy ... the success will go down in history to be the best ever Commonwealth Games," he said.

Six PDS assemblymen, also among the advertisers, unanimously extended a "big thank you" to all who made the Games a success and also to the Prime Minister for his dedication in the successful hosting of the Games.

The assemblymen are Datuk Ewon Ebin (Kundasang), Datuk Siringan Gubat (Ranau), Datuk Saibul Supu (Tandek), Datuk Steven Kutai (Inanam), Datuk

Gisin Lombut (Kiulu) and Datuk Joseph Sitin Saang (Kuamut).

Also among the advertisers were Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat Bersatu president Datuk Pandikar Amin Mulia, who is also Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, assemblyman Datuk Markus Majihi (Matunggong), and Sabah MCA chairman Datuk Chau Tet On.

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