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Ensure success of Commonwealth Games, organisers reminded

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight reminded the organisers of the 16th Commonwealth Games to ensure the success of hosting the world's second biggest multi-sport event.

The Prime Minister said managing an event like the Commonwealth Games was not easy.

The Games, to be held from Sept 11-21, will see participation from various ethnic groups from all continents.

"Physical facilities can be provided, but these by themselves are not enough to ensure the Game's success.

"What is more important is efficient management. We have seen that preparations, though satisfactory, can often be bogged with problems.

"At times, it appears as if there are two captains with different directions."

Hence, Dr Mahathir said when the Games proper is being held, all sides must work closely to ensure its success.

Speaking at the opening of the National Sports Complex in Bukit Jalil tonight, the Prime Minister said the organisers must resolve whatever differences they had.

"Time does not permit us to quarrel or defend our own `territory' during the Games.

"There is no need for us to defend our own `empire'.

"The only empire is the nation, and all of us must safeguard its image."

He also said investments in sports would not go to waste because they would help the people maintain both physical and mental fitness.

In addition, investment in and development of sports would bring huge returns, while the people's active participation in all sporting activities would create a greater spirit of competition, commitment and dedication.

He also noted that sports had become an industry that could contribute to the economic development of a country.

Sports events which were popular among the people had commercial value, he said, adding that they could lead to the provision of better facilities.

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