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Games-Opening

GLITTERING GAMES OPENING CEREMONY

MELAKA, July 21 (Bernama) -- Malaysians and foreign visitors will witness a splendid and glittering Kuala Lumpur 98 Commonwealth Games opening ceremony staged by 13,000 people, said Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin here.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Ja'afar, will officiate the opening, which will be a first for the head of state of a host nation, while in previous Games it was done by the Queen of England.

"There will be an element of surprise at the opening, so please come to the National Stadium at Bukit Jalil to witness it," said Muhyiddin during a briefing on the Games last night.

The Games opening ceremony will be telecast live to several countries and more than 500 million viewers were expected to watch it on television.

"The opening must be outstanding because it will be the window to gauge the grandeur of the Games," he said.

He said more than 3,000 people will be involved in the cultural events during the opening ceremony, 5,000 people will have flip cards, while the rest will assist in other areas to make the opening a success.

The pre-opening show will begin at 5pm while the opening ceremony will start at 8pm.

However, Muhyiddin said it was important to fill every section of the stadium as the success of the night will depend on the stadium being filled to capacity as wished by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said the benefit of hosting the second largest Games in the world after the Olympic Games would be realised in the long term because it would provide the opening to organise more sports meets of prestige.

"As such the successful management of the games will show Malaysia as a highly capable nation and we can prove it to the world," he said.

Also present at the briefing were the Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Abu Zahar Isnin and other community leaders.

-- BERNAMA

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