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Johor to buy RM400,000 worth of tickets

KLUANG, Sat. - The Johor Government has pledged to purchase tickets worth RM400,000 with a possibility of more, for the Commonwealth Games in September.

Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman made the pledge when launching the Johor leg of the Kuala Lumpur '98 Promotion Drive at Bangunan BCB today.

"The money, which will be taken from the Johor Sports Council fund for the purchase of the tickets, is our form of commitment towards the success of the Games.

"In whatever way we can contribute, the Johor Government will play its part," Ghani said.

The tickets will be made available to schools, youth organisations and the private sector to enable them to see the Games at the respective venues.

Those interested will have to apply to the State Culture, Youth and Sports Committee, stating how many tickets they need and for which venue.

"But they will have to come up with their own transport, accommodation and food. The State Government will only provide the tickets.

"We realise that RM400,000 cannot buy a lot of tickets considering that the prices for the opening and closing ceremonies range from RM30 to RM500.

"We will try to raise some money from the private sector," Ghani said.

Earlier, Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin also spoke of the need to fill up the 100,000 capacity Stadium Nasional - the venue of the Commonwealth Games opening and closing ceremonies.

"As Malaysians, we must take pride in the fact that we are hosting one of the biggest sporting events in the world and we must be ready to play our part.

"So buying a ticket for the opening and closing ceremony and filling up the stadium is a patriotic act. We Malaysians must show our support because we cannot rely on foreigners to fill up the stadium.

"In fact, that is the wish of the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to see a full house," said Muhyiddin.

He also revealed that the opening ceremony on Sept 11 will be a six-hour extravaganza - an array of shows which will depict the Malaysian story of success and of the different cultures coming together to forge the Malaysian identity.

The closing ceremony, which will be officiated by Queen Elizabeth II on Sept 21, will also be a six-hour show and just as grand with the climax of it being the Konsert Perdana.

"We are making all the preparations to ensure the success of the opening and closing ceremonies. After all, it will be the country's window to the world," Muhyiddin said.

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