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Anwar - jumpers

NORTH POLE JUMP A CAUSE FOR NATIONAL CELEBRATION, SAYS ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, April 23 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has congratulated the successful Malaysian North Pole parachuting expedition, describing it as an accomplishment for discipline, resilience and teamwork.

"Although the expedition accomplished its mission at a time of economic slowdown, its achievement is a cause for great national pride and for this, I say congratulations," said Anwar, who is also Finance Minister.

He was speaking to reporters after receiving the Pakistani state minister for government Ahsan Iqbal at the Treasury here today.

The 16-member expedition, including a mother of five, performed the jump two days ago from 3,000 metres and landed on the world's coldest spot at 1.48 am Malaysia time making the country the first Asian nation to achieve such feat.

Earlier North Pole parachuting expeditions were from the United States, Germany, Canada, Russia. Italy and Britain.

Besides planting the national flag, Jalur Gemilang, (Stripes of Glory), at the North Pole, the jumpers also brought down with them a 1.5 litre variant of the national car, Proton Wira.

During a televideo conferencing from Moscow with TV3 here today, expedition leader Abdul Rahim Dahalan, on behalf of his members, thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Anwar as well as those involved in realising the jump.

"This is an achievement of all Malaysians," he said.

Dr Mahathir had already congratulated the expedition immediately upon being informed of its success two days ago.

The team is scheduled to return home on Sunday.

Meanwhile, MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu, in congratulating the sky-jumpers, said they have done the nation proud.

"This is yet another successful attempt by Malaysians after our Mount Everest team," he told reporters here.

Samy Vellu, who is Works Minister, said the sky-divers have shown dedication and discipline in their mission.

He hoped more Malaysians would embark on similar expeditions and prove to the world once again that "Malaysia Boleh" (Malaysia can do it).

-- BERNAMA

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