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PM: Everybody's responsibility to ensure peace, harmony in country

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - It is the responsibility of all Malaysians to ensure that there is peace and harmony in the country at all times, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Malaysians have been able to live comfortably because political stability, peace, harmony and racial tolerance have enabled them to earn a decent living, he added.

The people, he said, should be thankful for this because if the nation was not peaceful and there were riots or fights, they would not be able to earn an income. He also said Malaysians of various races were able to cooperate and resolve problems or misunderstandings amicably.

"In a peaceful country like Malaysia, we can live in comfort, we can work and earn a living from our efforts," he said when flagging off 1,500 participants in the Duta Run, held in conjunction with the 16th Commonwealth Games which begins on Friday.

The 2.8km run, participated by taxi and bus drivers in the Klang Valley and their families, started and ended at Hentian Duta, in Jalan Duta. It was organised by the Entrepreneur Development Ministry.

Dr Mahathir said in Malaysia anyone could earn more if they put more effort.

"But because of the disparity in the income earned by the various races, the government had to give attention to the Bumiputeras so that they too could participate in all fields and catch up with the others," he added.

On the Games, Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should show the world that they were capable of hosting such a big international meet so that the visitors would return home with sweet memories of the country.

About 6,000 athletes and officials from 70 Commonwealth countries are expected to participate in the Games. Dr Mahathir said visitors to the Games would want to visit Malaysia again if they were treated well and this would benefit all parties.

"Every time they come, bus and hired-car drivers will also make some profits, the country will profit and we will all share the fruit of our efforts."

On Hentian Duta, Dr Mahathir said he was satisfied with the conditions at the bus and taxi terminal which was built in quick time to overcome the problem of public transport to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang.

The run was also held to promote the terminal. Also present were the Prime Minister's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, and Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed.

\* SEE PICTURE ON P3

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