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Mahathir-Games

VALUABLE LESSON LEARNT DURING COMMONWEALTH GAMES, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 25 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysians learnt something valuable when hosting the 16th Commonwealth Games last year -- that they can do anything if they believed in themselves.

He said the people had made the Games "a uniquely Malaysian affair" where everyone was committed, from the government down to the man-in-the-street.

Expressing his gratitude to those involved, the Prime Minister said the government provided full backing at every level, something unprecedented in the Games' history.

"...Tremendous assistance poured in from all sides, from companies offering sponsorships and material contributions to the tens of thousands of Malaysians of all walks of life who volunteered their services," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this in his foreword in the book "Crossing the Finishing Line", the official history of the 16th Commonwealth Games.

The book, launched today by Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, was published by the Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama), the Games' Host News Agency.

Dr Mahathir said from the moment Malaysia won the right to stage the event, it had decided "to give everyone something to remember" befitting its status as the last Commonwealth Games of the century.

"No effort, time and money were spared to provide state-of-the-art infrastructure and facilities, the latest information technology applications and a host of other things necessary to make the event a success.

"Despite the country still reeling from the effects of the financial and economic crisis that hit Asia in 1997, we managed to complete all the construction and the preparations to make good our promises," he said.

The Prime Minister said that as a result of the efforts, the event was described by others as the best Commonwealth Games ever, with 100 percent participation, unprecedented in the Games' history.

In the message, Dr Mahathir also thanked all those who helped in making the Games a success.

"We could not have done it without you. Everyone deserves a special word of praise for the success of the Games, Well Done!" he said.

The book will be distributed to Commonwealth member countries. It will also be available for purchase by the public at major bookstores.

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