

19 SEP 2001

Hishammuddin-Holiday

CABINET ALLOWS SCHOOLS TO TAKE PUBLIC HOLIDAY ON SUNDAY OR MONDAY

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 19 (Bernama) -- Schools nation-wide can have Sunday (Sept 23) or Monday (Sept 24) as a public holiday, the Cabinet declared today in appreciation of the efforts put in by teachers and students in the 21st SEA Games which ended last Monday.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, who announced this at a news conference at the ministry here, said this was decided at today's Cabinet meeting.

"The Prime Minister has agreed to allow the public holiday as many teachers and more than 8,000 students were directly involved in the SEA Games besides their large turnout to give support," he said after chairing his ministry's post-Cabinet meeting.

Schools whose week starts on Sunday can take Sept 23 as the public holiday and those starting on Monday, can take Sept 24, he said.

"The Cabinet congratulated and thanked the national contingent, volunteers, police and military personnel, students and those who helped make the SEA Games a success," he said.

At a news conference after closing the games on Monday night, the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad declared Saturday (Sept 22) a public holiday following Malaysia's triumph as overall champions.

It was, he said, a gift to Malaysians whose support motivated national athletes to stamp Malaysia's supremacy for the first time in the 42-year history of the regional games.

Malaysia bagged 111 gold, 75 silver and 85 bronze medals, dethroning defending champions Thailand whose medal haul was 103 gold, 86 silver and 89 bronze.

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