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SEA-Competition (Final)

MALAYSIA SEAL HISTORIC TITLE WITH ANOTHER THREE GOLDS

By: D. Arul Rajoo

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 17 (Bernama) -- Having clinched the overall title for the first time ever, Malaysia won three of the five golds contested on the final day of competition today to bring their SEA Games campaign to a glorious end.

Malaysia's Suzanna Ghazali Bujang and Sara Kamil Yusof grabbed the synchronised swimming duet title, the last gold medal decided in the first Games of the new millennium.

The victory powered Malaysia to an unprecedented haul of 111 gold, 75 silver and 85 bronze medals as they upstaged defending champions Thailand to emerge overall champions for the first time in the Games' 42-year history.

At the end of yesterday's competition, Malaysia had chalked up 108 golds to establish an unassailable lead over Thailand who had 101 golds.

Thailand took the remaining two golds today to finish second overall with 103 gold, 86 silver and 89 bronze medals.

Former regional sporting giants Indonesia managed only third spot with 72 gold, 74 silver and 80 bronze medals.

In Brunei two years ago, Thailand won the overall title with 65 gold, 48 silver and 56 bronze medals while Malaysia came in second with 57 gold, 45 silver and 42 bronze medals.

Malaysia's other two golds today came from synchronised diving -- Rosharissham Roslan/Yeoh Ken Nee in the men's 3m springboard event and Leong Mun Yee/Rosatimah Muhamad in women's 10m platform.

Thailand made a clean sweep of the last two golds in equestrian when they took the three-day eventing team and individual titles. The individual gold went to Pongsiree Bunluewong.

A total of 392 gold, 390 silver and 498 bronze medals were awarded in the 10-day Games.

The Games will be officially closed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the National Stadium here tonight.

Vietnam, who will host the Games for the first time in 2003, have emerged as a new force to be reckoned with by winning 33 gold, 35 silver and 64 bronze medals to finish fourth, just ahead of the Philippines who garnered 30 gold, 66 silver and 67 bronze medals.

Singapore settled for sixth position with 22 golds, 31 silvers and 42 bronzes and they were followed by Myanmar with a medal count of 19-14-53.

Laos walked away with one gold, three silvers and seven bronzes, Cambodia collected one gold, one silver and five bronzes while Brunei have only five silver and six bronze medals to show.

-- BERNAMA

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