

22 AUG 2001

Flight-Expedition

TWO RAKAN MUDA AIRCRAFTS RETURN FROM GOODWILL EXPEDITION

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 22 (Bernama) -- Two Rakan Muda Zodiac experimental aircrafts today returned from the 17-day goodwill expedition which toured five Asean nations.

The two light planes safely touched down at the Royal Malaysia Air Force (RMAF) base in Subang at about 9.30am. Both aircrafts left Bangkok last Monday and stopped overnight in Sitiawan yesterday.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who had just returned from his working visit to Uganda and Yemen, were among those who turned up to welcome home the two planes.

The goodwill expedition flew more than 4,000 nautical miles over Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand to extend the invitation for the 21st SEA Games on Sept 8-17.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, in a stateemnt, said the aircrafts' pilots were faced with severe mental and physical challenges during the expedition.

"I am touched and proud of the bravery and determination shown by the young Malaysians," he said.

Hishammuddin said the invaluable experienced gained by the Zodiac aircrafts' pilots would serve as guidance to others in future expeditions.

He commended the pilots for the ability in navigating the experimental aircrafts through thunderstorms, heavy rains and typhoon which had hit the five Asean countries recently.

-- BERNAMA

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