

19/08/2002

Organisers of world events to get continued support

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Government will support the organising of any event that promoted the country positively.

He said the Government was supportive of international events like the Formula One race, the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition (Lima), the Le Tour de Langkawi bicycle race and any event of international recognition because they contributed to the nation in many ways.

"It is not a matter of me being around. The Government will always be supportive of any event that is good for Malaysia," Dr Mahathir said at a Press conference after flagging off the Formula One Powerboat World Championship Malaysian Grand Prix at the Mines Resort city, in Seri Kembangan, near here.

Dr Mahathir was responding to a question of whether the Government would continue to support such events in his absence as the Prime Minister and prime mover of international sports in the country.

Acknowledging that the F1 Powerboat World Championship was yet another event which had promoted Malaysia internationally, he also expressed hope that the event would lead to increased tourist revenue for Malaysia.

"I believe that this event will be very popular as time goes by ... even now, the response is very good."

Dr Mahathir said he was told by the organiser that the Mines Lake was suitable for powerboat racing because the water was calm and free from waves which could destroy the shore-lines (during races).

"In fact I'm told that the boat can go faster when racing in the lake where the water is calm," he said.

Malaysia, he said, was in the running for the Best Organiser of Formula One Powerboat World Championship.

Last year, Malaysia was adjudged the best organiser of the event, which was held in Johor Baru.

Dr Mahathir who flagged off the race today near the Sapura Holdings headquarters building, also presented prizes to the winners of the World Championship Grand Prix.

Also present were Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Paduka Kadir Sheikh Fadzir, H2O Sports Sdn Bhd (event organiser) chairman Prince Sulaiman Shah Almarhum Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah and H2O managing director Datuk Yahya A. Jalil.