

10 AUG 2002  
Mahathir-premier  
PRIME MINISTER CLOSES PREMIER CUP

IPOH, Aug 10 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today closed the 17th Premier Cup Badminton Tournament at Indera Mulia Stadium here.

The tournament saw 12 teams of wives of ministers and elected representatives, except from Kelantan and Terengganu, vying for the trophy.

Also present at the function were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Datin Seri Endon Mahmud and Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir said the tournament should be continued because it allowed wives of elected representatives from various races to get together.

"We must also encourage as many people as possible to enjoy the sport as it helps to build up strong character in individuals," he said.

Speaking in jest, the Prime Minister said that although he was often used as a role model in many fields, he hoped it would not be in sports.

"I am not the sort who enjoys sports like my wife here. Please look to someone else as an example," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr Siti Hasmah who is chairman of Bakti, a welfare and charitable body of wives of ministers and deputy ministers, said the tournament would be continued as long as the Barisan Nasional (BN) remained in power.

She said the tournament which began in 1985 originally had 14 teams but with the shift in political power, Kelantan and Terengganu decided to become observers.

"I hope in future both teams will also compete because it will help strengthen unity," she said.

The tournament was won for the fifth consecutive times by the Sabah team (Bakisa) which defeated the Perak team (Baiduri) 3-2 in the finals.

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