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PM: Sports events proof Malaysia's no terrorists' haven

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The numerous international sports events held in Malaysia are proof that the country is a peaceful place and not a haven for terrorists, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said it was evident that people were coming to Malaysia freely.

"Yesterday, I was involved in the Rotax World Finals Go-Kart race and the Third Langkawi Malaysia Ironman Triathlon. Today, I am at the X Games. Next month, there will be the Le Tour de Langkawi. And after that, the Malaysian Grand Prix.

"All these events are very well participated by foreign athletes and tourists. So obviously a lot of people are coming here on their own free will.

"They don't need to take tranquilisers to overcome their fear of this country which has been described as a place for terrorists."

He said this when opening the ESPN Junior X Games III and the Asian X Games Qualifier IV today near the Petronas Twin Towers.

This was the first time Malaysia was hosting the Asian X Games Qualifier, which begins on Thursday and ends on Sunday. The Junior X Games (for those under 14) started yesterday.

More than 350 athletes from 14 countries in the region would compete in extreme sports such as skateboarding, bicycle stunts, aggressive in-line skating, sport climbing and wakeboarding. The games would be broadcast on ESPN in over 140 countries.

Dr Mahathir said extreme games provided the thrills that would attract young people to take up healthy activities.

After the launch, the crowd was treated to skateboarding and bicycle stunts by Rakan Muda athletes and a demo by Japanese in-line skaters Tekeshi and Eito Yasutoko.

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