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Mahathir-Sports

PM WANTS MORE PEOPLE IN SPORTS TO BUILD EXCELLENT GENERATION

MELAKA, Aug 9 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants more Malaysians to participate in sports not only as a recreational activity but to build an excellent generation through success in competitions.

Apart from this, the Prime Minister said, sports could also be a training ground for discipline as well as hard work in achieving success.

"For the young to participate in sports means they can face challenges and train themselves to overcome pressure," he said when closing the 18th Premier Cup Badminton championship at the Mini Bestari Stadium in Ayer Keroh here today.

Among those present were his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, who is also president of the Welfare Body for Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Bakti), his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and wife Datin Seri Endon Mahmud and Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam.

Dr Mahathir said sports was also a form of skills training to give the best performance, to move as a team and it "moulds the personality, especially for the young to fight against and overcome challenges".

Dr Mahathir cited the example of national marathon swimmer Abdul Malik Mydin who swam 58km across the English Channel from Dover, England to Calais, France, on Monday.

"This is proof that if someone trains a lot and really has the spirit, he can overcome great pressure even in conditions of cold water," he said.

The Prime Minister said the people, therefore, needed to prove their determination in any sport they ventured into to succeed like Abdul Malik and Datuk Azhar Mansor, who sailed solo around the world.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir, who gave away prizes at the championship between 12 welfare bodies of wives of elected representatives, said the event would be continued by his successor as it had succeeded in bringing the wives of federal and state leaders closer together.

Jokingly, he said after 2004, the championship might also see the participation of teams from Terengganu and Kelantan if the Barisan Nasional succeeded in winning back the two states.

In the championship, the Bakisa contingent from Sabah managed to defend their Premier Cup title for the sixth year running by beating Perak's Baiduri three sets to two.

Third was Bakti from the Federal Territory while Johor's Juita won the Classic Plate category by beating Kedah's Bidara.

Bistari president Datin Seri Asmah Abd Rahman, wife of the Melaka Chief Minister, then handed over the championship flag to Dr Siti Hasmah, who presented the flag to next year's host Baidunita, represented by its president Datin Seri Shamsiah Yassin, wife of the Perlis Menteri Besar.

-- BERNAMA

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