

20 FEB 2003

SPORTS: PM SAYS HAFIZ TO GET APPROPRIATE INCENTIVES

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the newly-crowned All England champion Muhammad Hafiz Hashim will be accorded appropriate incentives.

The Prime Minister clarified that his advice that Hafiz, should not be spoilt with overwhelming incentives did not mean that the efforts of the 20-year-old national hero should not be appreciated.

"We are proud as he was playing in a game which intially appeared that he will lose...he was left trailing by his opponent who reached game point but his tenacity saw him catching up," said Dr Mahathir.

Congratulating the youngest All England champion on behalf of Umno, Dr Mahathir said the fighting spirit shown by Hafiz should be emulated by all young Malaysians.

"This is for them not to easily give up but willing to fight on to like what the Kedah people say 'pulun sampai menang' (fight until you win)," he told reporters after chairing the Umno Supreme council meeting here today.

In the All England men's singles final last Sunday night, Hafiz defeated defending champion Chen Hong of China 17-14, 15-10.

-- BERNAMA
MNY AZH ZUL