

04/04/2005

Sports-Asia (Malaysia)

MALAYSIAN ALSO INVOLVED IN ORGANISING 2006 ASIAN GAMES

By: Farhanah Azmi

DOHA (Qatar), April 4 (Bernama) -- Although Kuala Lumpur lost the bid to host the 2006 Asian Games to Doha, Qatar, it does not mean that Malaysia is not involved at all in the hosting of the prestigious sporting event.

Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur and former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad are well-known names to the people of Qatar.

Malaysia is not only known through Dr Mahathir's leadership, in fact the country is also known for the involvement of its people in various fields at the national and international levels.

This was acknowledged by Kuala Lumpur-born Elyas David Lee, 48, who has been appointed as Sponsorship and Merchandising Manager with DAGOC (Doha Asian Games Organising Committee) for the past seven months.

He said that his services were sought by GAGOC "head hunters", adding that Doha certainly needed many foreigners and experts to assist in ensuring the success of the 15th edition of the Asian Games from Dec 1 to 16, 2006.

Elyas, or better known as David to his friends, said his appointment with DAGOC provided an opportunity to prove that Malaysians were capable of contributing their expertise in organising the prestigious sporting event.

Elyas, who has expertise in marketing, hoped that his services with DAGOC would prove that the expertise of Malaysians would be recognised at the international level.

On his work scope, Elyas said the Qatar government had yet to produce or market the Doha Asian Games 2006 souvenirs.

"So far, we have not produced any souvenirs. However, the concept later would be based on the introduction of the Qatar arts and culture besides merchandises based on the Asian Games mascot, Orry," he said.

He said the Qatar government was considering several countries including Malaysia, Thailand and China to produce the games merchandises.

Elyas also disclosed that not many people knew that the 16-foot monument of the mascot Orry, which was introduced on Dec 31 last year to mark the start of the Doha Asian Games Countdown, was the product of a Malaysian company.

He said the construction of the Orry monument was carried out by EIFS Sdn Bhd, based in Kuala Lumpur. The same company was said to be responsible for the construction of the Eagle monument at Dataran Helang, Langkawi.

The Orry monument was assembled within three weeks by 12 workers brought from Malaysia. The monument was launched in an elaborate and colourful ceremony by the Heir apparent of the state of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Hamad Al Thani at the Corniche, an esplanade facing the Gulf of Doha.

-- BERNAMA

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