

07/08/2003

Sports events identified to help boost tourism

MALACCA, Wed. - The State Government has identified sports activities organised here which can help increase the number of visitors and boost tourism in Malacca, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam said.

Citing statistics, he said 2.97 million tourists visited the state last year, an increase of 15.8 per cent compared to 2001.

As for this year's figures, he said 1.49 million people arrived here until June, an increase of 9.8 per cent compared to the same period last year.

"This is very encouraging and we hope the number of tourists will continue to increase, especially if more sports events are held in Malacca," the Chief Minister said in his speech when officiating at the 18th Piala Perdana badminton tournament at Mini Bistari Stadium, Ayer Keroh here today.

The four-day event will see wives of elected representatives from the various States squaring off for the coveted trophy, Piala Perdana, contributed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir is scheduled to close the tournament and present prizes to the winners on Saturday.

Present at the opening ceremony today were Bakti (the Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers Charity and Welfare Organisation) president Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Bistari (Association of Wives of Malacca Elected Representatives) chairman Datin Seri Asmah Abdul Rahman, State Assembly speaker Datuk Amid Nordin and State Secretary Datuk Ahmad Rosli Joharie.

A total of 12 associations are taking taking part.

They are from Perak, Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Selangor, Negri Sembilan, Malacca, Johor, Pahang, Sabah, Sarawak and Federal Territory.

Each team is represented by 12 players.

Later, after the opening ceremony, Dr Siti Hasmah, was presented with a cake to celebrate her 47th wedding anniversary.