

Newspaper	New Straits Times
Date	11/08/2017

PM: MALAYSIANS HOPING FOR BIG WIN

NST- 11/8/2017 PG. 4

Each victory secured by our athletes would be the sweetest memory, he says

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, representing about 30 million Malaysians, has conveyed the nation's hopes for the Malaysian contingent to soar and win big in the 29th Sea Games.

"All Malaysians, including myself, can only pray and cheer for your success as you (the athletes) will be the ones who will compete for the medals," he told some 700 athletes after handing over the Jalur Gemilang to the national contingent's chef-de-mission for the Sea Games Datuk Marina Chin.

Present were Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and wife Tun Jeanne Abdullah, who is also patron of the Paralympics Council of Malaysia.

Najib said Malaysia had recorded success in many areas, including the transport sector with the construction of world-class transport facilities such as the East Coast Rail Link project.

He said Malaysia had also built world-class sports facilities and hoped to see world-class performances from the national contingent in the Sea Games.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak handing the Jalur Gemilang to Malaysia's chef-de-mission for the Sea Games Datuk Marina Chin. Accompanying him (from left) are Olympic Council of Malaysia president Tunku Tan Sri Imran Tuanku Jaafar, Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and wife Tun Jeanne Abdullah. PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

"I have seen the huge sacrifice and efforts put in by the athletes, their coaches and families.

"Based on what I have witnessed, you have given your best and that is what we want," he said.

Najib said all Malaysians wanted them to emerge as champions in the Sea Games.

He added that each victory secured by Malaysian athletes as they took the first place on the podium would be the sweetest memory that money could not buy.

"Give your best, Do it for yourself, but above all do it for Malaysia," said the prime minister as the athletes cheered.

He said the upcoming Sea Games reminded him of the 1989 Sea Games when he was the youth and sports minister.

"The successes recorded in the 1989 edition has set the benchmark and standards for sports performance and planning."

He said the Malaysian habit of delivering success had led to the national team winning 67 gold, 58

silver and 75 bronze medals.

On receiving the Jalur Gemilang from Najib, Chin passed it to Pencak Silat exponent Al-Jufferi Jamari. The athletes pledged to secure a large number of gold medals that would be the best gift for Malaysia as the nation will be celebrating its 60th independence on Aug 31.

The oath-taking ceremony was led by defending discus champi-

on Irfan Shamshuddin, who presented a copy of the pledge to the prime minister.

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, and members of the Malaysian contingent to the 29th Sea Games at the Jalur Gemilang handover ceremony in Putrajaya yesterday.