

Holding the torch up high over city

PM leads runners through capital before 'light' of KL SEA Games taken on base jump from KL Tower

By **KATHLEEN MICHAEL**
kathleen@thestar.com.my

KUALA Lumpur 2017 Torch Run participants were in high spirits as they gathered at Tower 1 of the Petronas Twin Towers to kick-start their run in the capital city.

After a brief warm-up session, runners were flagged off and led by torchbearer, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

On hand to accompany him was his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin and Petronas group chief executive Datuk Wan Zulkiflee Wan Ariffin.

The run that began at 9am saw some participants multitasking while running – from taking selfies to capturing videos of the run and their surroundings on their mobile phones.

Some runners held the Jalur Gemilang up high as they ran the route.

Among the runners were Kuala Lumpur Disabled Persons Sports and Recreation Association members Saffee Ahmad, Janudin Taib, Fuad Sanoesi, and Mohd Zamri Misran who are wheelchair-bound and Mohd Afiq Fikri Firdaus Ibrahim.

The run was accompanied by the beat of drums and cheers from a group of cheerleaders, motivating runners to push on as they made their way to the first stop – Naza Tower.

As part of the day's activities, a

group of base jumpers led by Youth and Sports Ministry secretary-general Datuk Lokman Hakim Ali on tandem jumped off the 421m-tall KL Tower.

The Naza contingent's leg of the run began with Naza World Group of Companies Sdn Bhd group executive chairman and group chief executive Datuk SM Faisal SM Nasimuddin receiving the torch from two-time world silat champion Mohd Al Jufferi Jamari in front of Traders Hotel.

The torch was later passed to his brothers, Naza TTDI Group deputy executive chairman and group managing director SM Faliq SM Nasimuddin and Naza Corporation Holdings Sdn Bhd group executive chairman and group chief executive SM Nasarudin SM Nasimuddin who led a contingent of about 250 runners comprising staff from Naza, Petronas and the Youth and Sports Ministry.

Cheering them on to Naza Tower were a sea of Nazarians clad in blue.

At Naza Tower, the atmosphere was pumped up with three cheers of *Bangkit Bersama* and *Malaysia Boleh* by Khairy.

The Prime Minister was later led by SM Nasarudin to sign a plaque to commemorate the historic moment. He also wrote a patriotic message for Malaysian athletes on a car – KL 2017 Pledge Car.

The car, a Peugeot 208, has been making stops across the country since May to give the public an opportunity to write on its body messages to the Malaysian athletes



Najib running with the torch in front of KLCC, Kuala Lumpur accompanied by Khairy and other participants.

— Photos: FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

at the SEA Games and Asean Para Games.

Naza Corporation Holdings and Peugeot Malaysia also gave away 300 free tickets to the opening ceremony of the SEA Games at the Bukit Jalil National Stadium on Aug 19 through crowd competitions.

The torch was later handed over to former javelin champion Norsham Yoon to continue the run from Naza Tower to KL Tower.

In total, about 400 runners from corporations, celebrities like Amy Search, Farah Fauzana and DJ Kiran, and the public, took part in the 8.7km run that ended at KL Tower.

Among the stops made yesterday were at Naza Tower, in front of Royal Selangor (Pavilion Kuala Lumpur), McDonald's Bukit Bintang, Prudential Assurance Malaysia Bhd and Muzium Telekom.

Seen taking pictures with SEA Games mascot Rimau were Noor Ashiqin Hambali, 24, and Noraini Hawa Bahrin, 28, from the National Institute of Public Administration.

They said that although the trail up KL Tower was tough, they enjoyed being part of a memorable event.



The No Noise Percussion group put up a great show to keep spirits high as runners made their way round the capital city.

After a long trail, 100 members from Telekom Malaysia Bhd were still fired up at KL Tower.

Among the members was Nor Syuhada Mohd Weddan who said 500 volunteers from the company would be supporting the KL leg of the run.

The Kuala Lumpur 2017 Torch Run is held in conjunction with the 29th SEA Games and 9th Asean Para Games.

Today torchbearers will run from

Tenaga Nasional Bhd headquarters in Bangsar to Ajinomoto (Malaysia) Bhd.

The next day, the torch will be taken from SMK Segambut Jaya to Tesco Kepong; then from Tunku Abdul Rahman University College to Wangsa Walk on Wednesday.

On Aug 10, the torch will be exhibited at the KL Tower from noon to 3pm.

Activities will continue in Putrajaya from Aug 11 to 12.