

Do the nation proud, Dr M tells soldiers

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight advised the soldiers who have been selected to serve with the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia to carry out their duties in an exemplary manner to safeguard the image of Malaysia.

He said they had a heavy burden on their shoulders as they were not only representing the country but working under the UN banner to ensure the independence of Namibia.

Speaking to the 210 officers and men leaving for Namibia from Subang airport, he reminded them that they were not tourists and advised them to be wary of the dangers in Namibia in view of the fighting there.

"I hope that you will carry out your assigned tasks in a disciplined manner. Your sacrifice in being away from your family for one year is appreciated by the Government and the people and we will pray for your safe return," he said.

He said Malaysia was proud to be part of the UN peacekeeping force for the third time following its stint in Congo and on the Iran-Iraq order.

Also at the airport to bid farewell to the soldiers were the Prime Minister's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, Defence Minister Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen, Deputy Defence Minister Datuk Abang Abu Bakar, the Chief of Defence Forces Tan Sri Jen Hashim Mohamed Ali and relatives of the soldiers.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir visited the Pusat Islam in Kuala Lumpur to look into the final

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preparations for the international Quranic reciters assembly and examination which begins on Friday.

He was briefed on the preparations by organising committee chairman Datuk Dr Yusof Nor for nearly an hour.

Speaking to reporters later, Datuk Dr Yusof, who is Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, said the Prime Minister was satisfied with the preparations for the assembly which has drawn 35 participants from 23 countries.