

PM: Stability is vital key to progress

By Syed Nadzri and Azeman Said

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today once again underlined the importance of national stability, saying that this was the key to the country's economic progress achieved so far.

The Prime Minister said Malaysians should therefore focus their energies on creating stability for the country to achieve progress.

"We must foster noble values which contribute to peace and development of the country," Dr Mahathir said when launching the *Budi dan Jasa* (Good Deeds and Services) campaign at Angkasapuri here.

The event was part of a seven-hour programme for the Prime Minister during his visit to the Information Ministry complex.

Dr Mahathir pointed out that some countries had failed to achieve development because of wars and quarrels which caused chaos in their communities.

These countries might be governed by clever and efficient leaders but unfortunately some of them had failed to fully grasp the importance of creating a peaceful community for focusing its energies on national development and progress, he said.

On the *Budi dan Jasa*

campaign, he said it was to show the people's gratitude for the services of past leaders.

He said the services of junior level Government staff must also be appreciated for their contributions to the nation's prosperity.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived at Angkasapuri at 9am, accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, was first given a 15-minute ride on a hot air balloon.

Later, at the *Pentas Setia*, a special stage in front of Wisma TV building, a *Setia Negara* assembly was held comprising staff of the Information Ministry and its agencies.

A flag-raising ceremony immediately followed to the accompaniment of the song *Bendera Ku* and the national anthem.

This was followed by a choir presentation by the Ministry's staff and those from the Broadcasting Department and Information Ministry's Puspanita (the Association of Women Civil Servants and Wives of Civil Servants).

The Prime Minister then gave out Pingat Setia awards to 12 staff members of the Information Ministry for their outstanding contributions and services.

Dr Mahathir was also given the honour of blessing two new buses belonging to Information Department,

named *Setia* and *Semarak*.

At about 10.15am, the Prime Minister was taken to Studio 3 in Wisma TV to record his New Year message while Dr Siti Hasmah went to a separate function at Wisma Radio.

After about 45 minutes, the Prime Minister emerged to view an exhibition at the foyer of Wisma TV on the achievements and progress made by the Ministry.

He then officially opened the RTM News Centre and launched a new montage for all RTM news broadcasts.

After this, Dr Mahathir spent a few minutes inspecting the facilities available at the centre, followed by a live interview with *Asian Business News* and a chat with Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud through a satellite link-up.

The Prime Minister was then joined by Dr Siti Hasmah for a special concert on Malaysia's achievements and progress.

At the concert, a special song, *Mahathir Pahlawan Sejagat* (Mahathir the universal warrior), composed and sung by Farid Ali with lyrics by Nor Asykin Onn was delivered, accompanied by the Sri Petaling Choir.

Towards the end of the concert, the Prime Minister officially launched the extension of broadcasting hours for the various RTM radio networks.