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Bouquets and raya goodies for our troops

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali today praised the members of the Armed Forces and police serving here and abroad for their dedication.

She said Malaysian troops who had returned home safely from their overseas stints had enhanced the good name and image of the nation in the countries they served during their tour of duty.

Dr Siti Hasmah, who is wife of the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, was speaking at the handing over ceremony at Sri Perdana of Hari Raya 1997 packages to representatives of the national security forces.

The packages, containing festive goodies such as cookies, instant ketupat, satay gravy mix and serunding were prepared by the Association of Wives of Minister's and Deputy Minister's (Bakti).

As Bakti president, Dr Siti Hasmah presented the packages to Armed Forces Chief, General Tan Sri Ismail Omar, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Rahim Nor, Army Chief Jen Datuk Seri Che Md Noor Mat Arshad, Air Force Chief Lt Jen Datuk Ahmad Saruji Che Rus and Navy Chief Laksamana Madya Datuk Seri Ahmad Ramli Mohd Nor.

Packages were also presented to the Association of Armed Forces Wives Welfare Organisation (Bakat) head Puan Sri Azizah Abdul Aziz, representative of the Police Family Association (Perkep) Datin Rokiah Ismail, Police director of Internal security and public order Datuk Mohd Ghazali Yaacob, special branch director Datuk Norian Mai and management director Datuk Mohd Jamil Johari.

Also present at the ceremony were Bakti deputy president and wife of Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, and Bakti members.

Dr Siti Hasmah said this was the eighth year Bakti was making its contribution and a total of 18,000 Hari Raya gift packages were prepared for the armed forces and 4,000 for the Police Force.

Sparing a thought for the wives and families of the troops, Dr Siti Hasmah reminded them to be patient and to take good care of their families while they awaited the return of their loved ones.

In accepting the gifts, Ismail said these yearly gifts were meaningful to the forces who were on duty during the festive season as they would be celebrating away from their families.

The Hari Raya packages will boost their morale and instil a sense of pride as the gifts are viewed as a token of appreciation for carrying out their service for the nation away from home, he said.

Rahim said although these gifts had become a matter of routine for several organisations who prepared them every year, the troops were always "waiting in hope" to receive them.

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