

# Pour it out

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## Campaign to allow Malaysians to express sincere feelings

By MAZNI MUSTAFA

**IPOH: A nationwide campaign called *Cetusan Perasaan* (outpouring of feelings) will be launched next week to allow Malaysians to express their feelings about what is happening in the country.**

Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat said a large book would be placed at all public places such as shopping complexes and community halls and also in rural areas for people to jot down their feelings and opinions.

"The purpose is to get a true picture of the feelings of the 20 million Malaysians about problems facing the country.

"It is a way in which the Government can ascertain how far the people are supporting its actions and measures taken in addressing the country's problems.

"Here is the opportunity for them to express their sincere feelings. They can write whatever they feel in the book or they can give suggestions or opinions on things that are happening," he told reporters after briefing 50 information department officers here yesterday.

Mohamed said the campaign had been scheduled to go on for a couple of months to enable the ministry to gauge public response.

He said the ministry would then study the response and the findings would be handed to government agencies related to national security.

At an earlier function in Kuala Lumpur, he said the ministry would be keeping tabs on foreign propaganda and conspiracy to interfere in Malaysia's affairs and undermine peace.

He said resources of Radio TV Malaysia and the Information Department would be used to raise awareness among the people with the aim of strengthening their spirit of patriotism and uphold unity.

"The foreign attack on the country is too big but if the people love the country and stand united, they can reject any kind of propaganda aimed at humiliating us," he said after opening the biennial meeting of the RTM Veterans Association.

Mohamed said recent demonstrations and

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## Tok Mat: Survey shows stability

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riots in the federal capital clearly showed there was a foreign conspiracy to weaken the country and the leadership.

"I believe there are foreign emissaries trying to organise demonstrations but they have failed so far," he said.

"US Vice-President Al Gore's statement backing the *reformasi* movement shows there is a foreign conspiracy interfering in our domestic affairs and foreign elements are backing the movement," he added.

Mohamed said the results of a recent survey showed that the country remained stable.

"We have found the *reformasi* movement did not get much response from the people," he said.

Mohamed said the ministry had started an internal investigation into whether officers and staff of the Information Department were involved in the anti-government movement.

He said that personnel, including several district information chiefs, were said to be involved in spreading rumours and writing poison pen letters against the country's leadership.

"They will be called up and questioned whether claims made against them are true or just malicious lies," he said.

He said that Information Department personnel must not go against the Government as they had a responsibility to help the Government and the leadership explain the recession and the political confusion to the public.

"Although the number is not alarming, we must take action now as these personnel are close to the rakyat and can confuse the public if they do not understand the actual situation," he said.

In a related development, the United Nations Association in Malaysia chided US ambassador to Malaysia John Malott for comparing Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's outcry against atrocities in Bosnia to Gore's support for the *reformasi* movement.

Its spokesman Ian Chia said while it was true that Dr Mahathir was "very vocal when people were being killed in Bosnia," it was the responsibility of a leader to alert the world to mass killings.

"I am proud of Dr Mahathir for

taking the initiative and ashamed of the United Nations and the United States for delaying taking action," he said in a statement in response to Malott's interview in *The Star* on Friday.

He said that Malott's comparison of Malaysia's stand on Bosnia to Gore's concern over the trial of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was "totally out of point".

"In Bosnia, thousands were killed. Anwar's rights are intact as he is being given an open trial," he said.

He said it was clear that actions of the US delegation to Apec had been "well-planned and well-executed" to provide maximum publicity for US leaders.

"First, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made it bright enough for all the world to see that the US supports Anwar's *reformasi* movement.

"Brushing aside all protocol, 'the US leaders' actions show how powerful its foreign policies can be with the open declaration through Anwar's wife for supporting 'everything,' which could even include funds for rioting, worldwide publicity and arms if need be," Chia said.