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Hasmah-Philharmonic

PM'S WIFE OPENS MALAYSIA'S FIRST WORLD-CLASS CONCERT HALL

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 17 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister' wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali tonight opens the Petronas Philharmonic Hall, the country's first world-class concert hall, at the 88-storey Petronas Twin Towers, here.

Also present were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Cabinet Ministers and Petronas Chairman Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin and ambassadors.

In her speech, Dr Siti Hasmah said the official opening of the hall was indeed an achievement of another Malaysian dream.

"This event is the culmination of efforts long awaited by Malaysians to foster a sustainable development of music in this country," she said.

Dr Siti Hasmah said the completion of the hall and the establishment of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO), of which she is the patron, present another avenue to Malaysians and visiting music enthusiasts to experience live performances of some of the best in classical music in the best architectural and acoustic environment.

"This long-awaited development, complemented with concerts by other international orchestras, ensembles and soloist, together with performances by Petronas own Performing Arts Group would help Malaysia to play a role in the international music and arts world," she said.

She said that while the hall would provide the facility Malaysians had been waiting for, the establishment of the MPO would fulfil another long-left need in the development of music enjoyment and music education.

"The MPO will conduct master classes, workshops and other musical activities to nurture and assist aspiring musicians in their strive for excellence," she said.

Dr Siti Hasmah said that these initiatives hopefully would pave the way for the establishment of a music academy to upgrade music skills, knowledge and education to a truly professional level.

"We have indeed arrived at another major milestone in our progress towards achieving the cultural agenda set out in Vision 2020," she added.

Later, Dr Siti Hasmah and Dr Mahathir joined some 800 guests to witness the gala opening concert performed by the MPO led by its music director, Kees Bakels.

The Petronas Philharmonic Hall, at the foot of the Twin Towers, features an adjustable ceiling that flexes according to the acoustical conditions required by a fully-staffed orchestra or solo pianist.

A 44-stop pipe organ, stretching from floor to ceiling, towers over the orchestra pit.

The entire hall rests on thick pads that cocoon it from the din of shoppers striding through the country's largest shopping mall next door.

-- BERNAMA

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