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Mahathir-boy

MAHATHIR BRINGS RAYA JOY TO "ROBOCOP" BOY

ALOR SETAR, Jan 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is on a one-day working visit to Kedah today, had an unscheduled function on his itinerary to bring Hari Raya cheers to a boy ridden with a chronic neck ailment.

Accompanied by wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, the prime minister also presented Mohd Ady Fakhri Mohd Zahir, 8, with a hamper and RM300 pocket money at the boy's home in Lorong Air Puteh here.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid was also present.

"I'm so thrilled and proud... at first I thought it would be impossible to meet him," he told reporters, visibly beaming with joy and relishing the precious moments with Dr Mahathir.

"I'm so happy because not only Dr Mahathir turned up but also his wife and the Menteri Besar," he said.

The prime minister spent 30 minutes with Mohd Ady Fakhri, a standard two pupil of Sekolah Kebangsaan Seberang Perak here, and the boy's parents.

The boy's mother Siti Hajjar Sheikh Ahmad, 26, said her son was supposed to to be admitted to hospital earlier today because of pus developing on the affected part of the neck.

" We'll take him to the Alor Setar hospital immediately after the meeting with Dr Mahathir," she said.

Siti Hajar said she was stunned in disbelief upon receiving a telephone call from the Prime Minister's Office that Dr Mahathir would call at their home while visiting Kedah today.

"I'm so thankful that he obliged to fulfil my son's wishes. This is the sweetest and memorable Hari Raya for our family," she said, obviously touched by the prime minister's gesture.

Her son suffers from a neck disease that requires him to use a special vest with a brace-like instrument called "Lerman MRI Halo" to hold his rotting neck.

The contraption earned him the nick name "Robo Cop" from classmates and friends.

Mohd Ady Fakhri, the son of a former air force commando and now a petty trader, would undergo surgery the Tengku Ampuan Rahimah Hospital in Kelang on Jan 25.

The surgery is estimated to cost his parents RM10,000.

-- BERNAMA

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