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Rehearsing for millennium joy and Merdeka do

GETTING READY ... Dancers from Kompleks Budaya Negara in a full dress rehearsal for Malaysia's Centennial Towards A New Millennium celebration to be held at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil on Aug 30.

The dancers and popular artistes, including Siti Nurhaliza, Juliana Banos, KRU, Noraniza Idris and veterans such as Datuk M. Daud Kilau and Jeffrey Din will join 150,000 people at the celebration to coincide with the country's 42nd year of independence.

The event replaces the traditional National Day flag-raising ceremony usually held at Dataran Merdeka.

Culture, Arts and Tourism Ministry deputy secretary-general Datuk Tengku Alauddin Tengku Abdul Majid said the performance would mainly be centred on the country's achievements over the last 100 years with regards to politics, economy, social matters and culture.

"We expect a large crowd. To date a total of 120,000 free passes have been distributed at several shopping complexes, the Kuala Lumpur Central Market and tourist information centres in the Klang Valley," he said after the preview at the Panggung Negara last night.

During the celebration, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to insert a special message into a time capsule, which will only be opened on Aug 30, 2099.

Involved in the programme's organisation are the Culture, Arts and Tourism Ministry, Primary Industries Ministry, the Treasury and the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development.

The New Straits Times and China Press are the official newspapers for the two-year celebration to showcase the country's achievements in the past 100 years.

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