

31 AUG 1999

Merdeka-Young

YOUNG GENERATION'S PASSION FOR MERDEKA RECOGNISED

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 31 (Bernama) -- The young generation feel proud that no less than the Prime Minister himself has recognised their passion for Malaysia's National Day.

Celebrating the nation's 42nd day of independence today, the young are happy that Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last night "cleared" them of allegations that they got carried away in the chase for materialism, did not understand the meaning of independence and unpatriotic.

"Today, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for clearing our name," said Mohamed Azli Abdullah, 23, of Universiti Teknologi Mara.

Mohamed Azli, with four friends, were at Merdeka Square since 6am to witness the National Day parade.

They said they were proud of the successes achieved by the country.

"We are proud of Datuk Azhar Mansor who sailed solo around the world, of the Read brothers who walked to the North Pole, of the team that scaled Mount Everest and the contribution of more than 140,000 former students of Institut Teknologi Mara to development," he said.

Dr Mahathir last night expressed his happiness at the huge turn-out of the young generation at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil here for a National Day celebration.

In a video conferencing with Menteris Besar and Chief Ministers carried live by Radio Television Malaysia, he said it was a good sign for the country.

T.J. Liew, 17, a gymrama performer in today's National Day celebration, said very few of the young generation indulged in loafing.

"Most of us are good, we focus on our studies to achieve our ambitions. We love our country and family," she said.

A student of a private institution of higher learning, Hafez Osman, 21, from Klang, said despite not participating in the parade, he and his family were at Merdeka Square since 6.30am to together celebrate Malaysia's day of independence.

"Merdeka does not just mean to be free of foreign colonisation but to be free in our thinking as well...always think of the can do spirit of our Prime Minister and of our national heroes," he said.

-- BERNAMA

MNY TM THG