

30/08/2000

Dr M delivers rousing poem on meaning of Independence

PUTRAJAYA, Tues. - Continuing his 1996 poem Perjuangan Yang Belum Selesai (The Unfinished Struggle), the Prime Minister tonight delivered another rousing puisi entitled Erti Kemerdekaan (The Meaning of Independence).

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was moved to tears at one point when he delivered the 78-line poem which touched on the unseen dangers of the borderless world.

Malaysians, the Prime Minister said in his poem, should opt for their own recipe for success, using their own values and inner strength.

"Our destiny we grasp in our own hands and with our own given strength ... this struggle must continue," Dr Mahathir read to a spellbound audience gathered here tonight.

At one juncture, Dr Mahathir - wondering how some Malaysians were unwilling to acknowledge the bounties of which they were enjoying - was overcome by emotion.

Choking on his words, the Prime Minister had to struggle through the next few lines of his poem before regaining composure.

He received thunderous applause from the audience after he finished reciting the poem.

The event, organised by the Biro Tatanegara, was held to mark Malaysia's 43th National Day on Thursday.

Dr Mahathir's 1996 poem Perjuangan Yang Belum Selesai had retraced the Malay community's painful experience of colonialism and the difficult road ahead.

The event, held at an open-air venue, was attended by about 200 guests and dignitaries.