

04 JUL 2000

Kadir-Merdeka

MERDEKA MONTH TO PROMOTE TOGETHERNESS, SAYS KADIR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 4 (Bernama) -- The Merdeka Month celebration this year can help promote togetherness among the people, said Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir.

He said unity can be maintained by setting aside differences.

The national flag, the shouts of "Merdeka" and the national anthem are one and the same for all Malaysians, he told a press conference after a joint meeting of the 43rd Merdeka Month Celebration Committee and the National Sales Carnival Steering Committee here today.

"We hope the togetherness of 22 million Malaysians can be improved by setting aside differences such as political differences," he said.

Various activities have been planned for the Merdeka Month celebration from Aug 17 to Sept 16. Malaysia's independence day is on Aug 31.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will launch the Merdeka Month celebration and the raising the national flag campaign on Aug 17.

Abdul Kadir said activities to be held during the Merdeka Month are religious events, Eve of Independence celebration, National Day parade and the closing of the Merdeka Month celebration in Kota Kinabalu on Sept 16.

He said the closing of the Merdeka Month celebration on Sept 16 will be held in different places each year and next year it will be in Kuching.

"The Sept 16 date also marks an historic event -- when Sabah and Sarawak achieved independence through the formation of Malaysia," he said.

-- BERNAMA

RZS/KAY AHH THG