

# Panel working hard to make fest a success

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**PETALING JAYA:** The organising committee for the Kuala Lumpur World Film Festival is working round-the-clock to make sure that the event lives up to expectations.

The committee has less than a month to prepare the ground-work and organise the event, which is scheduled from Feb 16 to 18.

This is the first time a three-day event of this nature, which emphasises on peace, harmony, non-violence and non-discrimination, is being staged in conjunction with the 13th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit.

The film festival is jointly organised by the Information Ministry and the National Film Development Corporation Malaysia (Finas).

According to Finas deputy

director of promotions Norshah Thamby, at least 19 countries have confirmed their participation and they include Australia, China, France, Finland, Italy, New Zealand, Switzerland, Thailand, Vietnam, Morocco, Britain, Germany, Sri Lanka, Mexico and Uzbekistan.

"The event will depict Malaysia as a peaceful and harmonious country. All the selected films, which have peace elements, will show how peace can be achieved. Hopefully the masses can gain valuable insight after watching these movies," said Norshah.

Each country will only be allowed to send in one entry. As such, Malaysia will be represented by *Sayang Salmah* which was directed by Mahadi J. Murat.

The movie, Mahadi's third directing effort, was written by the director and set in pre-inde-

pendent Malaya. It is about a young man's frustrated attempts in fighting for independence, resulting in his arrest and imprisonment. Subsequent family tragedies eventually cost him his mental stability and his mother, played by Fauziah Nawati, suffers greatly to keep the family together.

On the choice of the film, Norshah said: "The selection panel felt the *Sayang Salmah* was the best among the lot."

The film festival will award films in three categories: Peace, Non-Violence and Non-Discrimination.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will launch the event at Dataran Merdeka on Feb 16 while the closing ceremony will be officiated by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail on Feb 18 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel.