Dr M's deeds to be carved in stone

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Sculptor to use ancient rock from Zimbabwe

LANGKAWI: An abstract sculpture will be hewn from a 3.5-billion-year-old rock called the Spring Stone from Zimbabwe to depict the good works that former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had done for the country.

The art piece, themed *Window of Opportunity*, would be carved from a block weighing eight tonnes, which was specially brought in from Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwean sculptor Gerald Takawira, 39, said it would take two months for him to complete the sculpture, which would be in the shape of a hand holding up a window.

Takawira, who started work on the sculpture on Tuesday, said the rock, which is from the great dyke area in Zimbabwe, was chosen because of its hardness and different colours.

Dr Mahathir spent some time watching Takawira chiselling away on the rock when he visited Galeria Perdana here yesterday during his first visit to Langkawi since retiring as prime minister on Oct 31. The sculpture would be placed in the gallery's garden as part of the landscaping.

Dr Mahathir also visited the Telaga Harbour Park marina in Pantai Kok where he boarded a luxury yacht for a cruise to Kuah.

In the evening, the former first couple broke fast with the people at the Ulu Melaka Lama Mosque.

Among those present were Kedah Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain, Langkawi MP Datuk Abu Bakar Taib,Kedah MCA chairman Datuk Beh Heng Seong and Langkawi MCA division chief Datuk Tan Hong Eng.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir reminded Muslims to be thankful that they were able to pray and fast in a peaceful and safe environment unlike those in countries which faced pressure from enemies.

He said Muslims could help the less fortunate by being united.

He said he was proud that non-Muslims were present at the *buka puasa*, adding that this enabled them to witness how Muslims performed their religious obligations.

"I am confident that with their attendance, they will not be so suspicious of Islam. It is not a religion of terrorist. Islam likes peace," Dr Mahathir said.