

13 AUG 2003

Kadir-Procession

THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL DAY PROCESSION MOST SYMBOLIC, SAYS ABDUL KADIR

PUTRAJAYA, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- The National Day procession to be held here at the end of the month can be described as the most symbolic event ever held in view of the approaching retirement of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as Prime Minister.

Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said the event would also be historic as it could be taken to be the launching of Putrajaya itself.

He said more than 300,000 people were expected to be at the "Boulevard" area in Presint 3, where a mammoth procession would be held on Aug 31 beginning at 8.30am.

"It is the first procession to be held in Putrajaya, (and) a farewell procession for Dr Mahathir," he told reporters when visiting the Boulevard to look at the preparations being made for the National Day procession.

Abdul Kadir also gave an assurance that the National Day procession this time would be extraordinary compared to the previous ones as it would highlight the country's successes and that of the administration's under Dr Mahathir's era from 1981 until 2003.

The minister said the theme for this year's celebrations would be "Malaysia's Development 1981 - 2003", and the floats participating in the procession would show the country's achievements in the various fields in a symbolic manner through the decorations put up.

He said ample parking lots would be provided while policemen would be stationed at strategic places to guide the people to the procession area.

Abdul Kadir also said that he had been assured by the project contractors that the Boulevard area would be ready for the occasion at least one week before the event.

He said that 12,000 participants were expected to take part in the procession and they would strive to show the country's achievements in the various fields including industry, agriculture, technology, education and racial unity.

Meanwhile in MELAKA, 100 patriots who had struggled for the country's independence would be invited to the launching of the Merdeka Month at the national level by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi at Bandar Hilir on Sunday.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam said among the freedom fighters to be invited would be former Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Ghafar Baba, Tun Fatimah Hashim, Tan Sri Aishah Ghani, Tan Sri Mustafa Abdul Jabar, Tan Sri Aziz Tapa, Datuk Fatimah Abdul Majid and Datuk Wira Borhan Md Yaman.

"All these patriots who had struggled for the independence would hand over the Jalur Gemilang to the Deputy Prime Minister that night," he told reporters after chairing the weekly Exco meeting, here today.

He said preparations for the event were going on actively, including work to put up more than 2,000 Jalur Gemilang along the road from the Air Keroh Toll Plaza right up to Bandar Hilir.

In addition, he said 50,000 Jalur Gemilang would be distributed to the public on that day when more than 100,000 people were expected to turn up for the event.

Mohd Ali said Abdullah would be taken in a procession from the hotel where he would be staying to the site for the launching ceremony at Bandar Hilir.

-- BERNAMA
RIZ SBS AO