

07 FEB 2003

Tunku-Celebration

TUNKU'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 7 (Bernama) -- The event to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the nation's first prime minister the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra will be held simultaneously nationwide starting tomorrow.

The function, to be attended by all Malaysians, is to remember his contribution and struggle to obtain the country's independence without any blood spill.

The month-long celebration, jointly organised by the Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister, the National Archive and the Tunku Abdul Rahman Memorial, would host a variety of events to educate the younger generation about the leader.

Its minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said Tunku was wise to choose the parliamentary democracy system and the constitutional monarchy as Malaysia's system of governance to unite the multi-ethnic community which were then suspicious of each other.

"Due to these policies we have a successful government until now," he told Bernama after chairing the celebration's meeting here.

Tunku, born on Feb 8, 1903 in Alor Star, was the 20th child of Sultan Abdul Hamid Halimshah -- the 24th Kedah Sultan.

He was the prime minister from 1957 to 1970.

In conjunction with the event, the National Archive would publish a book containing Tunku's five speeches when he was the premier and a series of his addresses as reference material for the younger generation.

Among the speeches included are -- the Aug 21, 1951 address as Umno Malaya president in Hotel Majestic, Kuala Lumpur; Umno assembly speech in Melaka on April 5, 1953 and the memorable announcement of the nation's independence on Aug 31, 1957 in Stadium Merdeka.

Besides, a video compact disc containing Tunku's life story -- his childhood, school days, family, political activities and his last days before his death -- would be produced.

Meanwhile, Pos Malaysia Berhad would produce commemorative stamps and first day covers bearing Tunku's portrait.

The celebration would also include a fund-raising dinner for the Yayasan Tunku Abdul Rahman to be held on Feb 28.

A 10-person dinner table would cost RM3,000 to RM4,000 and about 70 tables are expected to be sold for the night.

The main event for the night is the 2003 Tunku Award presentation to 11 students from the public higher learning institutions for their academic excellence.

Besides, they would receive a gold medal, Amanah Saham Malaysia shares worth RM1,000 and commendation certificates.

Other programmes include a seminar titled "Remember the Birth of the Late Tunku Abdul Raham : Father of Independence and Pioneer for Racial Unity."

Jointly organised by the ministry and National Archive, the seminar is expected to attract about 500 participants - mainly academics, politicians, government officers, journalists and students.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would present his keynote address at the seminar tomorrow.

In addition, essay writing contest at national level for students in the higher learning institutions, secondary and primary schools would be held.

Organised by the National Archive and Utusan Malaysia (M) Berhad,
winners would receive cash prizes and 30 consolation prizes.

-- BERNAMA

LIB AHH VP