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PM pays tribute to officials

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PUTRAJAYA, Sat. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed his gratitude and the Government's appreciation for the commitment shown by officials involved in the realisation of government ideas and aspirations.

The Prime Minister said although credit was often accorded to him for the success of projects and events in the country, he could not have achieved so much without the sense of responsibility of those directly involved in such undertakings.

"We can feel very proud of the way this country has developed. I thank everyone for giving the credit to me for all this, but actually it's not me. I'm lucky because the officials interpreted government directives with great interest and responsibility.

"At times, the initial government proposals were small, but when interpreted by our officials, they (the ideas) become much bigger and more attractive."

At the launch of the Millennium Monument at Precinct 2, he said, such officials had done the nation proud by turning simple projects into icons which Malaysians could be proud of.

"For example, when we proposed a maritime and air show in Langkawi our actual intention was only for small private and trainer jets, but the officials involved turned it into a big event, so much so that Lima is now one of the recognised maritime and air shows in the world.

"The same goes for other projects, including Putrajaya. The officials' interest to see a more attractive federal administrative capital has given birth to what Putrajaya boasts now."

He also paid tribute to Putrajaya Holdings president Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin for his strong interest and resolve in carrying out his duties.

On the Millennium Monument, Dr Mahathir said it was envisioned to document the nation's achievements in various fields since Independence. He said the 68-metre-high structure would also help the younger generation better understand the struggles and achievements of the leaders.

Four capsules containing speeches and important announcements of all the Prime Ministers are sealed in the monument, which was constructed with the bunga raya as the main motif.

"Since Independence, we have achieved success in many fields and all such achievements since 1957 are recorded in the capsules. This will be continued until the year 2020. The Millennium Monument will always remind us of events in the development of our beloved nation."

Also present were Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and wife Datuk Seri Endon Mahmood, Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsuddin Osman and Azizan.

After his opening remarks, Dr Mahathir slotted his capsule into the monument before signing a plaque to officially mark its launch.

Dr Mahathir and his entourage arrived at the Millennium Monument on a cruise boat from Putra Bridge.

He had earlier launched the Putrajaya Lake Cruise service, which will cater to tourists.

Apart from a cruise boat, which can accommodate 80 passengers, visitors can also enjoy the sights of the new federal administrative capital from traditional fishing vessels.

