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Sultan pays tribute to Dr M

Ridzwan Abdullah; Jason Gerald

PEKAN, Sat. - Sultan of Pahang Sultan Ahmad Shah today paid tribute to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's outstanding leadership, saying his immense contributions to the nation would always be remembered by the rakyat.

He said Dr Mahathir, who retires on Friday, after 22 years in office, had done many great things for the nation.

Malaysians, he added, were appreciative of how the Prime Minister had turned the country into a respected nation, and thought highly of his views and perspectives on issues such as globalisation and liberalisation.

"To the Prime Minister, I take this opportunity to wish you a happy retirement," Sultan Ahmad Shah said at the investiture ceremony at the Istana Abu Bakar here in conjunction with his 73rd birthday.

Present were Sultanah Kalsom, Tengku Mahkota Tengku Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, Tengku Puan Pahang Tengku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah Sultan Iskandar, Tengku Muda Tengku Abdul Rahman Sultan Ahmad Shah, Cik Puan Muda Julita Aishah Abdul Latif and other members of the royal family.

The Sultan thanked the Prime Minister for the support and assistance Pahang had been receiving from the Federal Government.

He also welcomed Dr Mahathir's successor, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and hoped the same assistance would continue under his leadership.

"Abdullah is the most qualified to fill up the post as he has all the experience as an administrator and politician."

The Sultan also commended Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob and the State administration for their efforts and effective leadership in bringing progress and prosperity to the State.

He called on his subjects, especially Muslims, to strive for greater unity, since Muslims worldwide now faced threats from external forces bent on domination.

Heading the list of recipients was the Tengku Besar Pahang, Tengku Kamil Ismail Tengku Idris Shah, who was conferred the Sri Sultan Ahmad Shah Pahang (SSAP) award which carries the title "Datuk Seri".

Nine others also received the SSAP, namely National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman, Transport Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy, Armed Forces Chief Jen Tan Sri Mohd Zahidi Zainuddin, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Norian Mai, Royal Malaysian Navy Chief Laksamana Datuk Mohd Anwar Mohd Nor, Royal Malaysian Air Force Chief Jeneral Datuk Seri Panglima Abdullah Ahmad, SP Setia Bhd chief executive officer Datuk Liew Kee Sin, Tradium Corporation Sdn Bhd chairman Akbar Khan Mohamed Khan and Kimzen Capital Services Sdn Bhd chairman Koh Kim Teck.

Sixteen people were conferred the Seri Indera Mahkota Pahang (SIMP), 14 the Darjah Sultan Ahmad Shah Pahang (DSAP) and 83 the Darjah Indera Mahkota Pahang (DIMP). All three awards carry the title "Datuk".