

Siti Hasmah turns 80 in Turkey

PETALING JAYA: Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali celebrated her 80th birthday yesterday with her husband Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and family in Bodrum, Turkey.

The couple have been holidaying in this historical town on the Aegean coast of Turkey the last 10 days.

They were recently joined by five of their children - Marina, Mirzan, Mokhzani, Mukhriz and Maizura - and spouses, and 12 of their 16 grandchildren.

According to Marina, the family decided on Bodrum because they wanted "somewhere relaxing and beautiful" that would be special for Dr Siti Hasmah. She added that they had been "having a nice time, mostly boating and eating".

Professionally, Dr Siti Hasmah has chalked up a string of achievements, including being one of the first Malay women doctors in Malaysia and the first woman to be appointed a medical officer in government service, in Kedah.

Later, as First Lady, she campaigned tirelessly for women's health, family planning, drug abuse control and adult literacy. In June 20, 1997, she was appointed Multimedia University chancellor.

It was her graciousness, warmth



Dr Siti Hasmah: On holiday with her family at historical town of Bodrum

and her ready smile that made her much loved and admired by Malaysians during her 22 years as First Lady until Dr Mahathir's retirement in 2003.

Dr Siti Hasmah and Dr Mahathir are expected to return home later this month.