

All parliamentary constituencies to get RM30,000 each for Merdeka bash

NST- 4/7/2007.

MALACCA: All parliamentary constituencies in the country will receive RM30,000 each for activities to celebrate the country's 50 years of independence.

For the first time, the 219 parliamentary constituencies, regardless of whether they are under the Barisan Nasional or the opposition, will receive the sum in the spirit of Merdeka.

In announcing this, Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim said a total of RM7.2 million had been allocated

for this purpose.

"We are celebrating the 50th year of independence and we want all parliamentary constituencies, including those held by the opposition parties, to be involved in the celebration," said Rais.

"When it comes to the 50th Merdeka celebrations, there will be no political difference. We will come together as Malaysians to celebrate our achievements.

"We want them to draw up their own programmes which can start after the national Merdeka cele-

brations which kicks off with the launching of the 'Fly the Jalur Gemilang' campaign at the Dataran Pahlawan in Malacca on Aug 17," he said.

Rais said this after making the final inspection of the historical Dataran Pahlawan.

Also present was Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam.

Rais said the highlight on Aug 17 would be the re-enactment of the declaration of independence with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdul-

lah Ahmad Badawi riding in the same car used by former prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman on Aug 31, 1957.

"We will re-create history on the day Tunku Abdul Rahman arrived in Malacca to proclaim the country's independence, how he arrived at Dataran Pahlawan and how he was greeted by thousands of Malaysians.

"Veterans from Umno, MCA and MIC involved in the celebration 50 years ago will be involved in this celebration."