

PM to launch Merdeka month on Aug 17

The Star - 4/7/2007

MALACCA: At least 40,000 people are expected on Aug 17 at Dataran Pahlawan here when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi launches Malaysia's 50th Merdeka Month (Bulan Kemerdekaan) celebrations.

Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister Datuk Seri Rais Yatim said the celebrations with the theme *Fly The Jalur Gemilang* would start at 8pm.

The highlight of the event will be the re-enactment of the day the late first prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj returned from London, to be received by thousands of people in Malacca.

In 1955, Tunku Abdul Rahman made a trip to London to negotiate our independence. Upon his return and subsequent arrival at the Bandar Hilir Padang (Dataran Pahlawan), Tunku Abdul Rahman announced the good news to the crowd of some 100,000 people.

"We have to make sure the atmosphere is poignant and depicts the incident, including the car he used, the leaders present and the philosophy of the preparation of Merdeka.

"There will be distribution of flags, while narration of the episodes and slogans of Merdeka would be heard throughout the night. It will be an evening of nostalgia but depicting history in the making," said Rais.