

Recording history via lens

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■ By Nurris Ishak
nurris@nst.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: At the stroke of midnight on Aug 31, 1957, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj raised a clenched fist in the air, announcing Malaysia's independence.

The historic moment, captured on celluloid, has become the most poignant and well-known symbol of freedom for Malaysians.

Being on the spot to capture meaningful moments to be preserved for all times. That, said the Raja Muda of Perak, Dr Raja Nazrin Shah, has been the role of photojournalists. As social historians, he added, they had been marking the milestones of the country's growth.

"The photojournalist has given us the most iconic of images that have concretised our dynamic history.

"In the 50 years since Merdeka, the country has been transformed from a poor and predominantly agricultural society to a modern, prosperous nation. We have come a long way, and by any standard, Malaysia is a success story," he said.

Speaking at the launch of "Photojournalism and the Imaging of Modern Malaysia: Milestones in the last 50 years of Malaysia" at the Petronas Ga-



Raja Nazrin Shah admiring a photograph displayed at the 'Photojournalism and the Imaging of Modern Malaysia: Milestones in the last 50 years of Malaysia' exhibition at the Petronas Galeri yesterday. Looking on are NSTP group editor-in-chief Datuk Hishamuddin Aun (right) and Bernama chairman Datuk Annuar Zaini.

leri yesterday, he recalled the historic image of Merdeka as the most famous and the most familiar example of photojournalism in the archives.

"This exhibition plays an important role in recognising photojournalists' invaluable contribution to the legend of a nation. We can tell our nation's story using the rich aesthetics of the photographic resources that are available in every photo library of

any newspaper in the country."

Raja Nazrin also called on Malaysians to strive to achieve greater success in the next 50 years "so that for our centenary celebration, we can boast of even greater achievements."

The exhibition is a collaboration between Galeri Petronas, the New Straits Times Press, Fujifilm Malaysia and the National Archives.

Over 100 photographs chronicling Malaysia's transformation are on display at the gallery until May 20.

Present were NSTP group editor-in-chief Datuk Hishamuddin Aun, Galeri Petronas director Tengku Nasariah Tengku Syed Ibrahim, historian Professor Emeritus Datuk Dr Khoo Kay Kim, art writer Eddin Khoo and NSTP e-Media general manager Zainul Ariffin Mohammed Isa.