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RM6.8 million from Rosmah to the needy

Kristina George

PUTRAJAYA: Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor will give away a US\$2 million (RM6.8 million) reward, given by a Saudi prince for finding and returning a precious box belonging to him, to those in need in the country.

Rosmah said she had found a box containing valuables on the yacht while on a family holiday in the south of France last August.

She had arranged for the box to be delivered to Prince Saud al Saud.

"Two weeks later, I received a letter bearing the Saudi royal seal and I found that the prince was grateful that I had returned his belongings to him."

As a token of his gratitude, the prince offered Rosmah a gift of US\$1 million.

Instead of accepting the gift, Rosmah told the prince she wished to contribute to selected non-governmental charity organisations and purchase state-of-the-art information technology (IT) equipment for the Sekolah Permata Pintar at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

The prince decided to double the cash reward.

The prime minister's wife said she would be distributing the re-

ward to 14 non-governmental organisations, the Wives of Elected Representatives Associations (Barisan Nasional only), as well as a special fund for women and children with chronic diseases set up by the Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Bakti).

Announcing the list of beneficiaries at a press conference yesterday, Rosmah, who is Bakti president, said her decision to contribute the cash reward was in line with Datuk Seri Najib Razak's

Malaysia tagline of "People First, Performance Now".

The list of beneficiaries also includes Malaysian Children's Hope Foundation, Malaysian Thalassemia Association, and the Malaysian AIDS Council.

Later, at the opening of a children's public speaking competition here, Rosmah said that children should be taught public speaking to prepare them to be leaders in the future.

She added that every time she attended a public speaking competition for children, she was always amazed by the eloquence of the kids.

"I am confident that Malaysia's

future will continue to be bright with these children who have such enormous potential and talent."

Rosmah also said her husband, Datuk Seri Najib Razak, was aware of how important and relevant it was to have public speaking skills in a leader in every level.

"A leader who is articulate in public speaking will be charismatic and great in the eyes of society.

"A leader's speech which is filled with genuineness and bravery can ignite spirits and inspire change in a person."

She also urged the Education Ministry to hold special workshops and classes on public speaking.

"My dream is that this will nurture the talent and potential in Malaysian children to be the best they can ever be."

In the competition, Nurul Anis Amral and Saeshan Pillay emerged champions in the Bahasa Malaysia and English categories, respectively.

The competition was organised by Yayasan Harapan Kanak-Kanak Malaysia.

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Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor (centre) with representatives of the beneficiaries in Putrajaya yesterday.