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SEREMBAN, JUNE 23 (BERNAMA) — DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TONIGHT THAT THE WILLINGNESS OF THE ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL TO SACRIFICE THEIR LIVES FOR THE NATION IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN ENSURING THE NATION'S SECURITY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT SOME OF THE PEOPLE HAD TO CARRY ARMS TO DEFEND THE NATION WHILE OTHERS PERFORMED OTHER DUTIES WHICH WERE EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY.

SPEAKING AT A BREAKING-OF-THE-FAST DINNER AT THE FIRST BRIGADE CAMP HERE, HE SAID THAT THE NATION WOULD NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO FINANCE THE ARMED FORCES IF SOME OF ITS PEOPLE WERE NOT INVOLVED IN ADMINISTERING THE COUNTRY, DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AND HELP ENRICH ITS COFFERS.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID PART OF THE MAJOR ALLOCATION TO FINANCE THE PURCHASE OF MODERN EQUIPMENT FOR THE ARMED FORCES CAME FROM TAXES COLLECTED FROM THOSE INVOLVED IN BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.  
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HE SAID THAT SUCH DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES BY THE PEOPLE WAS NECESSARY.

HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT SECURITY PERSONNEL WOULD UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION AND NOT BE ENVOUS ALTHOUGH THEY HAD TO ENCOUNTER VARIOUS CHALLENGES IN THE COURSE OF THEIR DUTIES.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THESE COULD BE INSTANCES WHEN ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL FELT THEY WERE AN UNFORTUNATE LOT BUT IN FACT, THE PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY WERE BETTER OFF COMPARED WITH THOSE IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE FUNCTION WERE NEGERI SEMBILAN MENTERI BESAR DATUK MOHAMED ISA DATUK ABDUL SAMAD AND CHIEF OF ARMY JEN. TAN SRI ZAIN HABIB.

--BERNAMA 0030/AN

-- BERNAMA 1650/02