

MAHATHIR - VETERANS
BM

23 P
KUALA LUMPUR, AUG. 30 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD REGRETS THE ATTITUDE OF SOME OF THE YOUNG GENERATION WHO HE SAID TRIES TO BELITTLE THE INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE.

HE SAID THESE PEOPLE WERE UNGRATEFUL AND TRYING TO DISMISS THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE WHO FOUGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE.

SUCH AN ATTITUDE, IF ALLOWED TO PERSIST, WOULD CRIPPLE THE SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM, HE ADDED AT A DINNER IN HONOURS OF ANTI-MALAYAN UNION VETERANS AT RUMAH MALAYSIA HERE.

HE SAID THAT THESE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE FORGETTING THE NATIONAL FIGHTERS WHILE ENJOYING THE FRUITS OF INDEPENDENCE.

"THEY DO NOT VALUE THE SACRIFICES OF THE FIGHTERS WHO OPPOSED COLONIALISM AND INSTEAD BELITTLE THEIR EFFORTS AND ARE PREPARED TO CLAIM THAT OUR INDEPENDENCE WAS ACHIEVED ON A SILVER PLATTER WITHOUT ANY LOSS OF LIVES." -- MORE 0030/II

ZCZC N180 (F/S)

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HE SAID THEY SHOULD INSTEAD BE OVERWHELMED BY THE SPIRIT AND STRUGGLE OF THE FIGHTERS WHO HAD FACED SEVERAL CHALLENGES BUT SUCCEEDED IN FRUSTRATING THE FORMATION OF THE MALAYAN UNION.

"THEY DID NOT HAVE ANY WEAPONS, ARMY OR EVEN THE INTELLECTUALS TO PLAN ANY STRATEGY TO OPPOSE THE COLONIALISTS BUT ALL THEY HAD WAS THE SPIRIT TO DEFEND THE DIGNITY OF THE RACE AND THE COUNTRY," HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE SPIRIT OF UNITY MUST BE INSTILLED IN EACH INDIVIDUAL TO ENSURE A UNITED AND STRONG NATION AND ALSO TO OVERCOME ANY PROBLEMS AND OBSTACLES.

ON THE SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM HE SAID IT DID NOT CONFLICT WITH THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM AS ACCUSED BY CERTAIN QUARTERS.

HE SAID THE SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM WOULD ENSURE THAT THE NATION WAS FREE FROM COLONIALISM AND ALSO DEFEND THE PEOPLE FROM BEING OPPRESSED AS STRESSED BY ISLAM. -- MORE 0035/II

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THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO URGED THE VETERANS TO CONTINUE THEIR FIGHT TO RECTIFY THE CHALLENGES ARISING FROM MISINTERPRETATION OR THE IRRESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE OF THESE YOUNG PEOPLE TOWARDS THE FIGHT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE NATION.

HE SAID THE GAP BETWEEN THE YOUNGER GENERATION AND THE GENERATION BEFORE INDEPENDENCE MUST BE BRIDGED TO CREATE A RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY WHICH LOVES THE COUNTRY.

IT WAS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD INVITED THE VETERANS AS GUESTS IN THIS YEAR'S MERDEKA DAY CELEBRATIONS SO THAT THE YOUNGER GENERATION WOULD REMEMBER AND APPRECIATE THEIR STRUGGLE, HE ADDED.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE DINNER WITH THE 420 VETERANS WERE DATIN SERI DR CITI HASMAH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK MUSA HITAM AND DATIN HAFIA AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MERDEKA DAY CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE, DATUK SANUSI JUNID. -- BERNAMA 0100/II