

LOYALTY TO COUNTRY VITAL, SAYS MAHATHIR

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight loyalty to the country is one virtue that can defend it against external colonialism trying to wrest its freedom and honour through subtle means.

He said there was now a new kind of colonialism in the economic, ideological and cultural fields that had succeeded in subjugating the countries and people who had achieved independence.

"If a person has the spirit of loyalty, he will strive in a positive manner to protect the object of his loyalty, be it his own self, family, place or residence or society," the Prime Minister added in

his National Day message over RTM.

He said it was in view of the importance of the value of loyalty that the theme *Loyal, United and Striving for Progress* was chosen for the National Day celebrations this year.

The Prime Minister said about 68 per cent of the country's population was aged under 30, which meant that the majority of the people did not understand how bitter it was to fight for independence from colonial masters.

He said the problem that arose from being ignorant about the struggle for independence, was the lack of appreciation and the will to defend it.

Dr Mahathir said the peo-

ple tend to take it for granted that independence was their's to keep for all times.

Dr Mahathir said it was easy for the world's super powers to use economy as a tool for colonialisation.

"By manipulation, they can cause the prices of our commodities to drop to the extent that we no longer make profits from our efforts," he said.

He added that these people at the same time, made sure that the country's production costs could not be further reduced by spreading allegations that "our productivity is not likely to improve."

"This is how subtle the foreigners are, so much so, some of our own people would even ask foreigners

to stop our efforts towards economic recovery.

"If foreigners are allowed to dictate whether our economy will grow or not, it means our nation is being colonised — in other words, we lose our independence."

He said the country was increasingly feeling the influence of foreign cultures and he regretted that many people had given up their culture too easily in favour of the foreign.

"In our country there are those who discard their own cultural values and totally emulate the behaviour and habits of the foreigners.

"Because of this, the identity of our own race is tarnished and if this is allowed to continue, our iden-

tity would soon be replaced by a colonial identity.

"If our values disappear, we will no longer be in control of ourselves. We will be colonised."

The Prime Minister said one of the ways that Malaysians could defend their independence and dignity was by being loyal.

He said one of the obstacles of a plural society was misunderstandings among the races.

In some countries, he said, civil strife brought about political instability and economic breakdown.

He added that keeping this in view, the Government always placed stress on the question of unity.

He also said that with the monarchical system, Malaysians had a symbol to pledge their loyalty to.

"We have been independent from the clutches of the colonialists for 30 years.

"This is very meaningful to those who love freedom — freedom from being scorned by others, freedom to rule our own nation and freedom to chart the future of our nation and people.

"Over all these years, we have developed our nation in all fields, including the economy, education, health, transportation, public utilities, defence and security.

"Therefore, it would not be a conceited thing for us to say how proud we are of our achievements."