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MALAYSIAN POLICE NOT BRUTAL

Mahathir-police

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191 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, Dec. 16 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's police force is not brutal and as guardians of national peace it is always careful when discharging its duties, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said it was most unfair for people to criticise and belittle the sacrifices of the police in ensuring national peace and security.

Such an attitude on the part of the people would suggest that they did not appreciate and value the services of the police, he added.

+Even though Malaysia is now at peace, there is a big possibility that it will not be so if we do not have a responsible police force,+ he said at the Royal Malaysia Police Award presentation ceremony at the Putra World Trade Centre here. The function was held in conjunction with celebrations marking the 184th Police Day.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is Home Minister, said though Malaysian police were allowed to carry arms they seldom resorted to using them unless their lives were threatened. -- more

▼16/12/19-30MST

CNS8315

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In certain countries, the military and police used weapons indiscriminately without taking into account the consequences even if it resulted in the death of many people, he added.

In Israel, for instance, police and the military freely shoot and kill people who attack them even though the attackers were only armed with stones, he said.

+In Malaysia, at times when the police had to face demonstrators, they were always careful and do not easily resort to using their firearms,+ he added.

Even if they had to, police only used tear gas and at times the baton to disperse demonstrators, he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also recalled an event in the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia when police personnel were +arrested and detained+ by a group of people and how the police strove to resolve the matter peacefully.

Police had to use their firearms in certain situations such as when fighting the communist terrorists or armed robbers who threatened their lives, he said. -- more

▼16/12/19-33MST

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+Incidents such as police firing on crowds will not happen if the people did not resort to the use of weapons to cause the death of the police personnel, +he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said if the people looked upon the police as their enemy and did not value their services, police would feel disappointed and would not be willing to use firearms even when they were attacked with weapons.

There would be chaos in the country if the police could not use weapons to ensure national peace and security, he said.

The Prime Minister expressed the appreciation of the government and people to the security forces particularly to the police force.

In certain countries people lived in fear and could not move about freely at night as they faced danger not only at home but also on the highways, he said.

+I have seen this situation in several countries I visited and am thankful for the peace prevailing in Malaysia, +he added. -- more

♥16/12/19-38MST

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Mahathir-police 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

The Prime Minister said there could be instances of negligence among certain police personnel but the number was very small but most of them discharged their duties well and with full responsibility.

Speaking to reporters later, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said he was only reminding the people to be thankful for the services rendered by the police.

+We have to value the services of the police and not do anything to kill them and should not rejoice over their deaths as though their deaths do not have meaning to us, + he added.

Many police personnel died and were injured when fighting the communist terrorists in the past, he said.

He added that the laying down of arms by the communist terrorists two years ago was a major success, he added.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayub, Deputy Education Minister Dr Leo Michael Toyad and Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Haniff Omar were present at the function. -- Bernama

♥16/12/19-50MST