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Mahathir-pacts

MALAYSIA DOES NOT BELIEVE IN PACTS WITH THE POWERFUL

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SUNGAI PETANI, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malaysia does not believe in pacts with the "powerful countries" with a promise of assistance if it is attacked.

He said that based on the experience of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the superpowers acted only in their own interests.

"We cannot trust anyone to come to our defence. Therefore, we do not believe in pacts with the strong nations in the hope that they will help us if we are attacked," he said at a reception to send off the last batch of 320 officers and men of the Malaysian Battalion (Malbatt) to Bosnia-Herzegovina, at the Royal Armory Third Regiment Camp here.

The prime minister said Malaysia must make its own preparations and the people must be willing to defend their nation.

He said the people of Bosnia were undergoing the worst torture because they were not allowed to own weapons to defend themselves. -- more

KHY MGN

▼20/12/17-33MST

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Mahathir-pacts 2 Sungai Petani

"Actually, the other communities should allow the Bosnians the right to defend themselves but they are preventing them from doing so.

"Instead, they allow the Serb aggressors to commit murders, rape and so on. This is an injustice which the world community cannot accept. Unfortunately, the big powers act according to their own interests," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the experience in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a lesson on how disastrous war was in this era.

In this connection, he said, Malaysians should be thankful that there were people who were prepared to join the armed forces to defend the nation voluntarily when some countries had imposed conscription.

He thanked the members of Malbatt for having volunteered to join the army and were prepared to follow orders to serve in another country in the face of danger. -- more

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Mahathir-pacts 3 Sungai Petani

"This willingness of our armed forces enables us Malaysians to stand tall, along with the other nations, and we will be respected for it. These are the qualities that the Malaysian people have," he said.

Dr Mahathir advised Malbatt members to discharge their duties orderly and with discipline in Bosnia-Herzegovina and not to expose themselves to danger unnecessarily.

He said Malaysia was sending soldiers to Bosnia-Herzegovina because it held to the humanitarian principle of helping the oppressed wherever they were.

"Today it is other people, maybe tomorrow it will be our turn. When it is our turn, we definitely would want the assistance of others," he said.

He also said that other countries came to Malaysia's aid in the collapse of the Highland Towers condominium in Hulu Klang on Dec 11.

"Many countries offered assistance without us even asking for help," he said. -- more

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U GE 20-12 00175 EA203

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Mahathir-pacts 4 (last) Sungai Petani

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians could not assume that they would be safe though the country was free from riots and civil wars.

The prime minister flew in by helicopter at about noon from Butterworth with his wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, and Pulau Pinang Chief Minister Dr Koh Tsu Koon and his wife.

They were greeted by Deputy Defence Minister Datuk Wan Abu Bakar Mohamad, Chief of Defence Forces Jen Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Abdul Hamid and Chief of Army Jen Tan Sri Borhan Ahmad.

Dr Mahathir spent about an hour with the Malbatt personnel at the camp before returning to Pulau Pinang.

This last of four batches of Malbatt troops brings to 1,489 the number of Malaysian soldiers sent to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The soldiers are scheduled to leave Pulau Pinang early tomorrow for Split, Croatia, in a Russian-made Illyushin aircraft chartered by the United Nations. -- Bernama

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