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Mahathir - Appreciation

MAHATHIR THANKS CONDOMINIUM COLLAPSE RESCUERS

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 27 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr mahathir Mohamad tonight thanked all those who took part in the search and rescue work and who contributed various forms of aid during the Highland Towers condominium collapse in Hulu Klang last month.

He said the tragic incident on Dec 11 highlighted the caring characteristic of Malaysians.

This was shown in the concern of all Malaysians who followed closely every new development in the sad event, he said at a dinner here to thank those involved.

About 3,000 people attended the function organised by the National Security Council.

Dr Mahathir said the quality of caring was demonstrated by the contributions of food, accommodation and moral support to the rescue teams and the survivors.

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Mahathir - Appreciation 2 Kuala Lumpur

He said Malaysia's friends from near and far also showed that they cared by offering their assistance without being asked.

Many countries offered various types of aid but Malaysia could only use the assistance from Singapore, Japan and France which sent their rescue units, he said.

He said the government was most grateful to these countries.

The government, he said, did its best to organise the search and rescue operation and it was unfortunate to have been unable to save the trapped victims except for those rescued on the first day of the incident.

An Indonesian domestic helper, Umi Sumirah, 23, and her two-year-old daughter were the only survivors from the collapsed 12-storey building in which 48 people died.

"We have learned much from the tragedy, that we must not take things for granted, and the government has taken certain measures to prevent a repeat of such a calamity," he said.

He said that if the actions taken to ensure that buildings adhered to stipulated regulations appeared drastic, they were only meant to prevent another similar tragedy.

Dr Mahathir again extended the condolences of the government to the families of the dead victims.

At the dinner, the Prime Minister presented letters of appreciation to the ambassadors of France and Japan and the High Commissioner of Singapore, and various individuals and representatives of agencies, private companies and the mass media who rendered help during the rescue operation.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who headed the Cabinet Committee on the Highland Towers tragedy, and the ministers who comprised its members. -- Bernama

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