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Mahathir-MIC

PM HOPES M'SIANS WILL CONTINUE TO LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight expressed the hope that Malaysians of all walks of life and races will continue to show tolerance and willingness to live together to ensure peace in the country.

"I sincerely hope every one can maintain this way of live," he said at a dinner to mark the 50th anniversary of the Malaysian India Congress (MIC) here tonight.

He said it was characteristic of Malaysians of various races to associate with each other freely for the good of the country.

Dr Mahathir said nobody had expected that when the country achieved its independence in 1957, it could prosper with its multi-ethnic and multi-religious population living in peace and harmony.

"The country has now been cited as a model for others to follow and those people who did not believe so had thus changed their minds," he added.

The Prime Minister said he hoped the MIC would grow to greater heights and continue to serve as good partner of Umno in the Barisan Nasional (BN) in the years to come.

Dr Mahathir who was presented with a golden kris by MIC President Datuk Seri S Samy Vellu, said in a lighter vein that he actullay wanted to "disappear" from the country after having served as prime minister for 15 years this year.

"People might have the wrong idea that I have been around for too long, and I tried to be away for a year, but I couldn't and with this kris with me tonight, I hope to be around for another 50 years to come," he added.

His wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah was also presented with a golden hair pin by Samy Vellu's wife, Datin Seri Indrani.

The Prime Minister also launched the MIC Home Page on the Internet in conjunction with party's golden jubilee, and then presented gold medals to 30 founder members of the party who others who had served the Indian community.

Earlier, Samy Vellu said in his speech that he was grateful to the Prime Minister for the attention and guidance he had given to the Indian community in this country.

"Your image has been so strongly implanted in our minds and hearts that it can never be erased," he said.

Samy Vellu said the MIC would not slow down after reaching 50 years of age, adding that members had dedicated themselves towards creating a vision as to how the Indian community should be when Vision 2020 was accomplished.

"I can daringly say that the MIC will continue to stand strong, tall and proud as the sole representative and voice of the Malaysian Indian community," he added. -- BERNAMA

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