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Mahathir - Deepavali

DEEPAVALI JOY NOT AFFECTED BY AUSTERITY DRIVE, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 28 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the current austerity drive to face challenges to the nation's economy does not affect the people's joyous celebration of their festivals.

Wishing all Malaysian Hindus a happy Deepavali, Dr Mahathir said he was happy that the people could still celebrate their religious festivals despite the present economic problems as a result of the ringgit depreciation.

Dr Mahathir believes that Malaysian Hindus, with enough cakes and drinks spread out for relatives, friends and guests, would usher in the Deepavali on Thursday with all the rejoicing as in the past years.

"This is something unique about us. We can face whatever challenges with full responsibility and discipline," he said in his Deepavali message issued by the Prime Minister's office today.

The Prime Minister said that with the people's continued support for the government's efforts to bring development and prosperity, any problem could be resolved.

"The attitude of tolerance and understanding among the people of various races has brought about unity with the country enjoying peace, stability and prosperity," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this was the contributory factor to Malaysia's success and prosperity since its independence 40 years ago.

"The government hopes this situation will continue to prevail," he said.

Just like any other religious festival, Deepavali was also an auspicious day for strengthening friendship among the people, Dr Mahathir said.

The tradition of visiting each other's homes during the respective festivals should be nurtured and strengthened, he said.

-- BERNAMA

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