

01 FEB 1997

Mahathir-Solidarity

PRESERVE SOLIDARITY FOR NATIONAL PROGRESS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

LANGKAWI, Feb 1 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight advised Malaysians to continue to preserve racial unity to ensure continued peace and prosperity for the country.

The Prime Minister said that any misunderstanding and disunity among the races would not bring any benefit to anyone and would bring about chaos and hinder progress.

"Muslims must be united and maintain good relations with the other communities professing other faiths, so that we can all succeed," he said at a fast breaking ceremony with the people at the Riadusz Solihin Mosque, Padang Lalang, here.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should be grateful that the country was peaceful and that the people lived in harmony.

He said that in some countries the Muslims fought among themselves and caused various problems including threats to personal security.

He said while Malaysians should be grateful for the prosperity, they should not be lulled by the comforts of life and peace enjoyed in the country.

The Prime Minister also advised the people of Langkawi to accept the development that was taking place on the island without harbouring any suspicion on those who had come to invest.

According to him, the investment brought into Langkawi to develop the island and the effects from such development had brought much benefit to the local people.

Among the benefits from such development was soaring land value which had turned many islanders into millionaires.

Dr Mahathir said the development in Langkawi had offered many opportunities to the local people either in terms of job creation or business opening.

The development of Langkawi had also attracted the interest of others including foreigners who had come to visit the island, and their arrival also meant additional income for the islanders, he added.

"Although the tourists stay at the hotels and spend there, the effects of development open up opportunities to the islanders especially in business which yields high returns," he said.

Upon arrival here earlier this afternoon, the Prime Minister took a helicopter ride to have an aerial view of the development of the various projects on the island.

Among the projects are the Pulau Rebak Marina, the Langkawi International Airport runway extension project and the passenger jetty at Tanjung Malai. -- BERNAMA

MFJ AO