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Sikhs back Dr M's leadership

Patvinder Singh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The Sikh community turned out in full force at most of their Gurdwara Sahibs (temples) here today to show support for Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's continued leadership and to pray for his good health.

In Sentul, the Sikhs' sentiments were displayed immediately after they had finished their weekly Sunday morning prayers.

They unfurled a banner in support of the Prime Minister and chief giani (priest) Jaswant Singh said the prayers. At the end of the prayers, all present shouted Bole So Nihal! Sat Sri Akal! (the Sikh battlecry and call to victory).

Temple president Arjan Singh said special prayers were offered to "give Dr Mahathir the strength and ability to lead the country as he has done in the past".

He said the Sikh community was very confident of the Prime Minister's leadership and fully supported his efforts to make the ringgit strong and stable.

"It is a time-tested trait of the Sikhs never to betray a chosen leader. We don't question the Prime Minister because we know that he is doing the right thing for the country, not for himself," Arjan said.

He said Malaysian Sikhs had always been supportive of the Government and its efforts to develop the country and added the Sikh community had thrived amid Malaysia's progress.

Committee member Mejar (R) Kirpal Singh took to task certain quarters for undermining Dr Mahathir's work.

"We feel strongly that he is doing all he can, given the present circumstances, and on our part we will ensure that the Sikhs cut down expenditure and not spend unnecessarily," he said.

The Sikhs said a telegram had been sent to Dr Mahathir expressing support for his actions.

"We always have his health at heart as he is a special person and our strongest leader. We wish him full recovery," Kirpal said.

The Prime Minister's office said in a statement yesterday that Dr Mahathir would not be officiating at all official functions scheduled for today and tomorrow due to a flu.

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