

12/08/1998

PM: We want to remain our own `tuan'

Farush Khan; Noor Adzman Baharuddin

PENANG, Tues. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he was confident the people would not want to see the Government bow to outside forces in developing the country. Dr Mahathir said the Government had developed the country since independence without begging from outsiders.

"We don't want to call others tuan. We want to be our own tuan (master)," he told a huge crowd at the Penang International Sports Arena Indoor Stadium in Relau. The gathering, Dr Mahathir said, was the biggest of all his visits to the States.

He had visited Kedah followed by Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Johor and Perak to meet the people to explain to them the economic problems and the people's role in helping the Government to overcome them.

About 10,000 people comprising Ministers, Assemblymen, community leaders and members of voluntary organisations were in the audience tonight. Also present were the Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Dr Mahathir said the country had developed projects such as the Kuala Lumpur International Airport and highways on its own, with the support of the people.

"Our children have also managed to pursue their studies locally and abroad and now we already have 14 universities.

"All this we did ourselves without asking others to help."

He said some foreign forces were not only trying to make the country bankrupt but were also determined to split the people's enduring unity. Dr Mahathir said outside forces had no right to dictate what the country should do.

The Prime Minister said:

"We are democratic. If we are not satisfied with the Government we can change it or the wakil rakyat. We do not want outsiders to interfere in our affairs.

"We have been doing things on our own and we do not need their advice."

Dr Mahathir said he was confident the people will always be with the Government.

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