

14 OCT 1998

Mahathir-Unity

DR MAHATHIR LAUNCHES NATIONAL UNITY DAY

SHAH ALAM, Oct 14 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today launched the National Unity Day with the theme "If We are United, the Economy will Progress".

Dr Mahathir then addressed some 2,500 people representing government departments and agencies, non-governmental organisations, political parties, religious groups, voluntary organisations, chambers of commerce, old folks homes, homes for the handicapped and Adolescent groups as well as children.

Also present at the gathering at the Dewan Jubli Perak here were Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Abu Hassan Omar and Minister of National Unity and Social Development Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail.

The programme for the launching included reading of the Rukun Negara and expression of support for Dr Mahathir and the government in handling the economic problems, a pantomime by children of the Tabika Perpaduan Negeri Selangor, poetry recitation and an exhibition of the activities of the National Unity Department and Community Development Department.

Meanwhile in his message to the souvenir programme issued on the occasion, Dr Mahathir said the country's independence would be meaningless if the people lived in disunity and quarreled among themselves.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's ability to bring about unity among the communities had brought about immense benefits -- peace, prosperity and wellbeing for the people.

He said it was the government's hope that the people would have a high sense of patriotism and realize the need to preserve the nation's independence.

"We should not be easily influenced by the plots of certain groups to create chaos in the country to serve their personal interests," he said.

He said the people should be vigilant and strive to handle threats from mischief makers out to create disorder in the country to serve their interests.

Dr Mahathir said the people's unity was the key to the country's progress and stability and it was all the more important if the country's population comprised people of different race, religion, culture and language as in Malaysia.

-- BERNAMA

RAZ AAM