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Dr M: We must be one heart to defend nation

Saiful Azhar Abdullah; K. Bala

LANGKAWI, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the people must be of "one heart" in defending the country from a new form of "economic colonisation" brought about by the speculative attack on the ringgit and other regional currencies.

He said it was vital for the people to set aside political differences and be united in defending the nation's independence which was being jeopardised by the current economic problems brought about by "external factors".

"We must be of one heart in this matter, although we may have political differences, to defend the independence of the nation.

"We must be of one heart, co-operate and strive to protect our nation.

"This is what I am hoping for (from the people)," he said at the breaking of fast with the island's residents at the newly-completed Masjid Ai'shah in Sungai Menghulu, Kuah.

Also present were his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali and Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid and his wife Puan Sri Nila Inangda Manyam Keumala.

Dr Mahathir said the people should be grateful that the nation had not reached a stage where it would have to seek external assistance.

To continue to resist foreign pressures, the people must invest in productive ventures instead of keeping jewellery or assets, he said.

The capital generated by such investments would keep the country going.

The Prime Minister explained that it was better for the people to invest their money than to keep it under their pillows.

Calling for calm and resoluteness, he said the people should also play their part during this difficult period by avoiding strikes and demonstrations.

"Through such perseverance we can regain our wealth. We must not forget that prior to our independence 40 years ago we were poor."

Dr Mahathir also reminded Muslims that they should not be too fanatical in their approach to Islam.

Earlier, Sanusi, who had just returned from Saudi Arabia, said a trade delegation of Saudi businessmen would visit the State in March to explore business opportunities.

He said the Saudis were also interested in visiting Langkawi for their holidays but wanted the programme tailored to their needs.

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