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Give undivided support to PM, Malaysians told

KUCHING, Mon. - Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud today reminded the people of the need to continue to give their undivided support to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in facing the present economic downturn.

He said it was important for all to remain united and follow the economic recovery guidelines drawn up by the Federal Government.

"We should be grateful and thankful to the Prime Minister who has been working hard to ward off lies hurled against the country.

"As such, we should use today's gathering to renew our spirit of patriotism towards the nation, especially in trying times like this," he said.

Taib said this in his speech at the National Day celebration gathering held at the Padang Merdeka this morning.

About 7,000 people, including Cabinet Ministers and local dignitaries, attended the function.

In Kota Kinabalu, Chief Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok in his National Day message said the celebration should serve as a reminder to the people of the importance of love, care, patriotism and loyalty to the nation.

He called on all Malaysians not to rest on their laurels or take things for granted but to instead gear themselves for heavier responsibilities ahead.

In Kota Baru, Menteri Besar Nik Aziz called on the people to understand the meaning of independence in its true context.

"Independence is sought in Islam but many don't understand its true meaning.

"It is not merely to be free of colonialism. As Muslims, we should also free ourselves from penjajahan syirik (colonialism of things which are un-Islamic)," he said.

He also expressed happiness that efforts were being made to celebrate the National Day according to Islamic principles.

In Kuala Terengganu, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad today called on the people in the State to forge greater unity and join forces to defend the dignity of the nation, according to Bernama.

He said that during this period of economic crisis, it would be most demeaning for people to resort to actions to make the situation more difficult.

It would be worse if they were to collaborate with outsiders to take advantage of the situation, Wan Mokhtar said in his National Day message.

In Johor Baru, Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, speaking at the parade held here today, urged the people to remain united during this difficult period, in line with this year's National Day theme "Our Country, Our Responsibility".

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