

26 JAN 1998

Mahathir-Unity

HELP GOVERNMENT AND SET ASIDE POLITICAL DIFFERENCES, SAYS MAHATHIR

KOTA BAHARU, Jan 26 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on the people to set aside political differences and work together to help the government rehabilitate the country's economy.

He said people's unity was important in efforts to overcome the current economic downturn experienced by the country.

"None will be spared from the current economic problems, be they political parties, governments or politicians. As such, we need to be united," he said at the breaking of the fast at the residence of Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa at Seri Puri, Peringat, about 20km from here.

Dr Mahathir said he was confident that given strong unity among the people, the country would get over the current economic problem.

"Our parties are strong and the opposition parties are strong too. But in this aspect of rehabilitating the economy, the opposition parties are supporting us too," he said at the reception attended by some 1,500 people including state government leaders led by Deputy Menteri Besar Haji Abdul Halim Abdul Rahman.

Dr Mahathir also called on the people to increase their savings and avoid wasteful expenditure.

"The money kept in local banks could be used to finance production of local products and thus reducing imports," he said.

However, he said the government was not trying to stop the people from spending because it would create problems to traders.

"The important thing is to buy Malaysian made goods which is cheaper compared to imported ones," he said.

He said the people should be glad that the economic problem faced by the country was not as severe as that faced by other countries.

"We don't experience poverty (like in some countries) because we still have the capability to spend," he said. --BERNAMA

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