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PM: Strong growth proof of efficiency

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JITRA, Fri. - The nation's strong economic growth is proof of the efficiency of its administration, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Citing the poor standard of living before Independence, the Prime Minister said the people had also contributed towards the development.

"For 40 years we have worked together to develop this country without any foreign help.

"We worked together to make this country a respectable and a model nation for other countries," Dr Mahathir said at the opening of the Jitra Tenaga Nasional building.

He said although some countries had secured independence earlier than Malaysia, most of them had yet to enjoy as much success as Malaysia.

"We have proven to the world that we are able to develop our country without foreign help," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the efficiency of the Government's administration and the support of the people were crucial to Malaysia's progress.

This was exemplified by the Government's effort to check the poverty rate in the 1970s, which has since been brought down to seven per cent from 50 per cent.

The Prime Minister also dismissed allegations that the current economic problems were caused by the inefficiency of the government administration.

The country had in fact developed faster than some States in Europe as a result of its administration, he said.

Dr Mahathir said the country's full employment situation and dependence on foreign workers also spoke volumes of its tremendous growth.

He expressed appreciation to the people for their support to the Government during the present difficulties.

Dr Mahathir said the strong support of the people would prevent the country from being re-colonised.

Later, the Prime Minister joined hundreds of Muslims to break fast in the compound of the building.

Also present were his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid and his wife Puan Seri Nila Inangda Manyam Keumala, Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim and Tenaga Nasional executive chairman Datuk Dr Tajuddin Ali.

Later, Dr Siti Hasmah, who is the Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Bakti) president, presented Hari Raya goodies and other gifts to the needy in the Kubang Pasu district.

Dr Mahathir also joined shoppers at Pekan Rabu who were looking for goodies for the celebration.

Accompanied by Dr Siti Hasmah, he stopped at the three-storey complex in the heart of Alor Star for 30 minutes of shopping.

Traders and customers alike paused to speak to the Prime Minister as he visited stalls selling buka puasa fare, clothes and craft.

Dr Mahathir stopped at several stalls to buy traditional kueh, nangka madu (jackfruit) or just to speak to the traders.

The Prime Minister and Dr Siti Hasmah also collected nine types of kueh worth RM1,170 they had ordered from their regular store operated by 80-year-old Aishah Mat.

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