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Mahathir-Message

MAHATHIR CALLS ON PEOPLE TO UNITE TO FACE NEW MILLENNIUM

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 31 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight called on the people to learn from the lessons of history which require them to close ranks and be disciplined to face attempts to recolonise the nation in the new millennium through the globalisation system of the west.

The prime minister said the country had been colonised before because its people were indisplined, because of a jostle for places and power, and now it would appear that the people had forgotten the lessons of history.

He said that when the weak asked for foreign help, their defence would crumble and the country would be recolonised.

"What is clear is that we are unprepared for the challenges of the new millennium. We, especially the Malays, have the same old habits and culture that caused us to be colonised for four-and-a-half centuries," he said in his 2000 New Year message over Radio Television Malaysia (RTM).

Recalling the history of the Malay states, from the fall of Melaka to the Portuguese to Umno's struggle against the Malayan Union, Dr Mahathir said the people could rejoice in welcoming the new century and millennium but they must beware of the dangers of globalisation that come with it.

"But the former colonial masters have plans to recolonise us. This time a different method will be used to conquer our country. This method is introduced as globalisations and a borderless world," he said.

Dr Mahathir said they would control the economies of weak nations, own banks and businesses and support free capital flow with the excuse that poverty could be eradicated this way.

"What's strange is that while the free flow of capital transcends borders, humans cannot. The poor will be imprisoned without their own borders so as not to tarnish the rich nations.

"This is a borderless world, this is globalisation. The rich will become richer and the poor will work to enrich the wealthy. Of course the poor nations are also free to penetrate the rich markets but what do they have to sell in the rich markets that have yet to be taken over by the giant investors from the wealthy nations?" he said.

Dr Mahathir said the economic crisis in Malaysia and other East Asian countries in July 1997 was a result of globalisation and was something real and not a forecast or fiction of the imagination.

-- BERNAMA