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Malaysia respected for proactive role in UN, says Razali

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Malaysia has gained respect for its foreign policy through its involvement in the United Nations, not only from members of the Non-Aligned Movement, but also from other countries.

Former UN General Assembly president Tan Sri Razali Ismail said due to the recognition and on the basis of Malaysia's track record in international activism, the country was committed and obliged to continue to be proactive.

"It is no coincidence that Malaysia has been particularly proactive during the leadership of Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"It is now inconceivable that there can be a de-escalation, or a narrowing of priorities, if and when there is change of political leadership," he said in his speech at the Rotary Club of Bukit Kiara Sunrise's Guest Day on Wednesday.

However, Razali said if Malaysia was to increase its commitment and contribution to resolving global problems, it would require a gradual recognition that international interests did not necessarily contradict national interests.

"In the right context and in the right measure, nationalism and internationalism are and can be mutually supportive.

"I am not suggesting that national interest be compromised in favour of internationalism, but increasingly national considerations can be defined in terms that encompass the well-being of other states and people.

Razali said globalisation and information technology had made it a necessity for all states to think global even when acting locally.

He said to be an active player in the UN, it was also important that Malaysians accepted and understood the role of the country and its responsibilities in the international arena.

This would mean serious steps to prepare, strengthen and consolidate institutional capacities, and to attract talented and skilled people to the public sector, he added.

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