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PM reminds people to value nation's freedom

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The people need to be reminded of the value of an independent nation which must be preserved, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

A free people will be able to stand up against any form of colonisation, he told a Press conference after launching the Barisan Nasional manifesto at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman and Umno president, was asked to elaborate on points contained in the manifesto.

He said Malaysians generally valued independence having been under colonial rule for 400 years.

"We struggled for independence. Now it seems that there are forces trying to recolonise us by other means."

Dr Mahathir said the financial crisis in the region and the fate of other countries which were forced to submit themselves to foreign agencies and powers had proven that freedom must be valued.

Without this, the country would be dictated to and the economy controlled by others.

Earlier, speaking to a crowd of BN component party leaders, candidates and supporters at the Tun Hussein Hall, he said the BN would continue to make Malaysia a free, united and successful country.

"We are a free people, not under any colonial power. We want to remain free," he said amid shouts of support from the crowd.

Dr Mahathir said the manifesto was deliberately worded in "simple language for the people to understand what we are promising and that we are able to fulfil them".

"We cannot make promises we cannot fulfil merely to fish for votes."

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