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PM: Peaceful Ramadan shows harmony despite economic woes

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight Malaysians were able to observe Ramadan peacefully because the people did not believe in "wild actions" despite the economic problems.

He said although Malaysia was also affected by the economic problems, just like other countries in the region, the situation was not worsened by street demonstrations and friction among the various races.

Speaking before the breaking of fast with 381 orphans from the Federal Territory Muslim Orphans' Welfare Association at Tabung Haji, Dr Mahathir said the people were going about without any rioting or fighting among themselves and instead were living in peace and harmony.

He said if there was rioting it would be difficult for people to earn a living, (it would) affect businesses and make the situation even worse.

Dr Mahathir said although the economic problems had affected Malaysians, the situation was under control because the people co-operated with the Government on all matters.

He said he was grateful that the reformasi activities of a small section of the people were not taking place during Ramadan.

The Prime Minister said certain groups were using rioters purportedly to champion human rights when in fact the actual right was the right to live in peace and harmony.

"What is the use if the majority of the people are not able to live their lives in peace? Certain groups try to get the support of others to pursue wild actions," he said.

Dr Mahathir's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali presented donations from the association worth RM100,000 to the orphans for Hari Raya and school expenses.

Association president Datuk Ahmad Razali Mohd Ali said that the donations from various individuals and corporations started in 1989 and had amounted to RM1.03 million.

This year each child received RM80 "duit raya" and between RM100 and RM140 for school expenses.

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