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Malaysians must reject politics of hatred, says PM

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KUCHING, Sun. - The death of Sergeant R. Sagadevan and army commando Mathew Medan in the hostage-taking crisis in Sauk will be in vain unless Malaysians reject the politics of hatred, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said the people should reject those who spread hatred among the races and followers of different religions as failure to do so would result in riots which would destroy the country.

"It is true that there was another Muslim who was tortured by the (Al-Ma'unah) group but he was not killed. They killed Sagadevan and Mathew because they were non-Muslims.

"In our country, we will not allow such sentiments which lead to killings just because people are from a different faith," the Prime Minister said at a community luncheon at the State Assembly building here.

Dr Mahathir said politics of hatred had become a security issue with the Barisan Nasional Government monitoring those trying to sow seeds of hatred among people of different races and religions.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir met Mathew's father Medan Munying, his mother Landun Ngumbang and younger brother Menis, 22, to express his condolences and present a personal donation.

"When I met his parents I could understand their anger and bitterness as their son was tortured and murdered. Anyone will feel likewise if it happened to their children who were not only killed but tortured."

Dr Mahathir said there was nothing that could be done to bring back the two people who had been murdered by those who wanted to topple the Government which they claimed was un-Islamic.

These people claimed that they wanted to establish an Islamic Government.

"As we can see they killed people who had never done any wrong to them. In fact, those killed were police and armed forces personnel who ensure our safety and also the safety of Al-Ma'unah members.

"They were so ungrateful to those who protected their safety that they were even prepared to kill them in such a cruel manner.

"All this comes from hatred and anger propagated by certain people that led to this group becoming incensed to the extent that it was willing to torture and kill," Dr Mahathir said.

"It is lucky that it was only a small group. They (those inciting hatred) would want to see more people hating the Government and to be willing to kill.

"But the majority of Malaysians are non-violent. They will not support killing or torture to set up an Islamic Government."

The Prime Minister said the Barisan Nasional represented different ethnic groups, religions and cultures.

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