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Mahathir-Deepavali

PM REMINDS MALAYSIANS NOT TO RISK UNITY IN THE COUNTRY

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has reminded the people not to risk the existing unity and harmony in the country through extremism that can create tension among the various races.

"I would like to appeal to all Malaysians to learn a lesson and appreciate the good life we are enjoying today as fortunate Malaysians," he said in his message in conjunction with Deepavali to be celebrated by Hindus tomorrow.

He said that people of various races, religions and cultures had succeeded to live in this independent country in peace and harmony and to have mutual respect for each other.

Dr Mahathir said that unlike in some other countries, the people of Malaysia, whether they were from the majority or minority group, were free to practise their respective religions, cultures and customs without feeling afraid or threatened.

"This may be a common thing for most of us especially the younger generation. But believe me, this is a blessing upon us as fortunate Malaysians," he said.

The prime minister said that everyone had tried very hard to preserve unity and harmony in the independent nation and this had resulted in its success to develop the country and to ensure just and equitable wealth for the people.

"We must admit that we have experienced racial clashes in 1969 but we have learnt a lesson from our mistakes and it is most appropriate for us not to repeat them," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that the people should take advantage of festivals like Deepavali to forge closer ties among the various races to ensure continuous harmony and well-being.

He and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, wished "Happy Deepavali" to all Malaysian Hindus.

-- BERNAMA

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