

29 NOV 2000

Mahathir-Military

STAY AWAY FROM POLITICS, DR M TELLS MILITARY AND POLICE PERSONNEL

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 29 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reminded military and police personnel to uphold professionalism in carrying out their responsibilities and to avoid from being involved in party politics.

The prime minister said this was crucial in ensuring continued peace and progress in the country.

"If they are involved in politics, there would certainly be disunity. They will not be able to discharge their responsibilities professionally as they would be influenced by their political leaning," he said in his speech at a gathering with 450 members of the Malaysian Armed Forces (ATM) at the Defence Ministry, here this afternoon.

The function, which was also attended by Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, was followed by a closed-door dialogue.

Dr Mahathir said he gave the reminder as there were efforts by the opposition lately to involve the military and police as well as civil servants to be involved in politics by instilling hatred against the government.

The prime minister said besides sowing the seeds of hatred against the government, the opposition parties which strived to wrest power also made various claims such as planning to set up an Islamic nation in Malaysia, which in reality was already a Muslim nation.

The opposition also claimed that Malaysia was not a Muslim country as it was not implementing hudud law but they must realise that other Muslim nations in the world too were not implementing hudud law.

"If we are serving a government that we hate, we will not be able to discharge our responsibilities well, the country will not be able to develop and prosper," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government itself had never taken the opportunity to involve the military and police in party politics, although it had a better chance to do so, because it realised that such a move would only destroy the government's administrative machinery.

"The civil service, military and police must always abide by the policies and directives of the government in power.

"If there is a threat, the government is fully confident that it can direct the administrative, military and police officers to counter such threats," he said.

Dr Mahathir stressed that the peace enjoyed by the country as a result of the professionalism upheld by the civil service, military and police was among the factors that enabled Malaysia to develop rapidly since attaining independence.

Other countries that gained independence after the Second World War had faced various economical and political problems, uprisings and wars which at times brought destruction to the countries concerned.

The prime minister, who was accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali to the gathering later broke fast with the ATM members at the Khalid Ibn Al-Walid mosque, at the Defence Ministry.

It was the first official breaking of the fast attended by Dr Mahathir since Muslims began fasting on Monday.

They later performed Magrib, Isya and tarawikh prayers at the mosque.

-- BERNAMA

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