

# National service for non-bumis suggested

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This may be a way to get them to serve in the armed forces, says Dr M

By **Martin Carvalho**  
martin@thesundaily.com

**MALACCA, Sat:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the government may propose compulsory national service for non-bumiputras if their participation in the armed forces remains low.

He said it may be appropriate to introduce this to get non-bumiputras to serve in the armed forces in light of their poor participation.

Replying to a question on the low number of non-bumiputras in the armed forces, Mahathir said the national service is merely a suggestion.

"The government need not introduce national service as the number in the armed forces is sufficient ... if it is to be implemented, maybe for the non-bumiputras," he said after attending the special forces gathering at the Sungai Udang Army Camp here today.

Mahathir said as citizens who consider Malaysia their home, it is appropriate that non-bumiputras play a more active role in defending the country's sovereignty.

Asked what may be the likely reason for the low participation of non-bumiputras, he said it may be due to the low wages and allowances.

"On this question, we cannot differentiate wages between the races ... we must give evenly," he said.

Mahathir said it would be more appropriate to appeal to

the sense of patriotism and nationalism of the non-bumiputras as a means of attracting them to join the army.

In his speech, Mahathir called on members of the armed forces to better equip themselves with the latest knowledge, in particular with the rapid development of the information age and globalisation.

He warned the threat of re-colonisation by foreign powers via globalisation is

real and there are plans for a second round of "attacks" on Malaysia.

"Take note of what I am saying ... it is not a fairy tale merely to scare everyone into obeying the government."

He said his doubts over the monetary and fiscal policies mooted by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank were proven true.

Mahathir cited the recent disclosure by former World Bank chief economist Joseph Stiglitz on the aim of the

organisation, as a vindication of his suspicion that there are foreign powers out to take control of developing nations through economic means.

"We had been colonised for 450 years. Never again will we allow ourselves to be recolonised," he added.

Mahathir was conferred the Special Forces' coveted Green Beret by Army Chief Gen Datuk Seri Md Hashim Hussein and Special Forces Chief Brig-Gen Ahmad Rodi Zakaria.