

10 DEC 2001

Mahathir-assistance

ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANS ARE VOLUNTARILY GIVEN, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

CHANGLOON, Dec 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the assistance provided to the Afghan refugees by Malaysians from all walks of life was made voluntarily, not on the urge of the Malaysian government or the international community.

"It was to help others who face hardships as well as to foster closer bond among Muslims," said Prime Minister.

Taking as an example the Umno Youth's humanitarian mission which left for Pakistan yesterday, Dr Mahathir said it was a commendable act.

"Although we lead a good life, when we see others suffer, we help them out. In this way, we could promote good ties with other Muslims," he said at a function to break the fast and hand over assistance to the orphans at Kampung Lembah Palas here.

Dr Mahathir said that by helping others in need, Malaysians were also making friends.

He said this willingness to help others was also shared by non-Muslim Malaysians.

"We also receive clothes and other items from the non-Muslims," he said.

Dr Mahathir said such worthy spirit should be encouraged.

"I hope that in helping outsiders, we should not also forget to help the less fortunate within our midst," he said.

He urged the well off to work together with the government in alleviating the burden of the less fortunate.

Present at the function were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali and Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain.

-- BERNAMA

MZM MAN ABG