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Mahathir-Masses

DR M DISPELS NOTION THAT LEADERS ARE NEGLECTING ORDINARY FOLK

POKOK SENNA, Jan 25 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has dispelled notions held by certain quarters that government leaders have neglected the common folk.

He said there was no truth in such a suggestion when in fact government leaders were constantly serving the interests of the masses and this could be seen from the level of development they brought to each corner of the country.

Uppermost for the government leaders was to keep improving the lot of the people and their living standard, he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said this when addressing leaders of Umno branches in the Pokok Sena and Padang Terap divisions at Sekolah Menengah Sains Pokok Sena here today.

The function kicked off the first of such meetings this year between Dr Mahathir and Umno branch leaders nation-wide.

He called on the Malays to remain united under Umno as this would give party leaders added strength to continue serving them.

" Unity gives us strength. Singly, palm-leaf ribs that form a broom can easily be broken but together they are rigid and strong, " he said.

Dr Mahathir said Umno leaders could carry on building the nation more effectively provided the Malays remain united and are solidly behind them.

He said history had shown that the Malays, when united, were strong enough even to secure independence for the country.

Although devoid of military might to take on the British then, the Malays because they were united, could nullify British plans to set up a Malayan Union, he said.

" At that time then, the Malays look upon Malay leaders as their saviours regardless of where they come from," he said.

Although poor and had few educated people among them, millions of Malays stood behind their leaders giving them moral support and eventually booting out the British colonials, he said.

He said the Malays were united then as they were all bent on redeeming the dignity of a colonised nation.

As Umno was formed with the interests of the Malays at heart and not for the selfish pursuits of the leaders, the Malays should justifiably support a cause that took care of their interests, he said.

Also present were the prime minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain, Padang Terap Umno division chief Datuk Dr Affifudin Omar and head of the Pokok Sena Umno division Ahmad Lebai Sudin.

-- BERNAMA

JM RYN