

27/01/2001

Dr Mahathir praises armed forces' professionalism and discipline

SIK, Fri. - The armed forces came in for another round of praise for their professionalism and discipline from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.

Dr Mahathir also commended high ranking soldiers for their impartiality in discharging their duties.

"Unlike the armed forces of some countries, ours is a professional and disciplined one which does not take sides in discharging its duty.

"They only carry out orders of government leaders," he said.

Dr Mahathir said such professionalism and discipline had enabled the armed forces to discharge their duties effectively and made the country a safe place for the people to live in.

He said this during a Hari Raya gathering with some 1,200 soldiers at Gubir Camp near the Malaysia-Thai border, about 50km from here.

Also present were Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Army Field Commander Lt Jen Datuk Zaini Mohd Said and Armed Forces Chief Jen Tan Sri Zahidi Zainuddin.

Dr Mahathir also thanked the armed forces for their sacrifices to the country.

He said many dedicated soldiers had lost their lives in fighting the enemies of the country, especially during the fight against the communist insurgency.

Speaking to reporters later, Dr Mahathir also said the Government was reviewing certain allowances paid to soldiers.

He said the Government cared for the welfare of soldiers and wanted them to enjoy better allowances and housing quarters.

Earlier, addressing villagers at Kampung Keda, a housing scheme for hardcore poor families under the Kedah Development Authority in Kampung Kota Aur, Dr Mahathir said those who received aid and assistance from the Government should not oppose the Government.

He said the Government was committed to providing assistance to the poor and needy through various programmes, despite their political belief.

However, many of the recipients are supporting the Opposition, especially Pas.

He said Pas had managed to influence the people into believing that they should not be thankful to the people who helped them.

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