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Flag-Defect

FLAW IN MALAYSIAN FLAGS SHOULD BE RECTIFIED

By: Rozilan Salleh

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 31 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian flag which has flown proudly during the 44 years of independence is aimed at cultivating in Malaysians pride and respect for the country but that pride will be lost if there is a flaw or defect -- even minute -- to the original structure of the "Jalur Gemilang".

Such was the case in many of the Malaysian flags that were hoisted at a roundabout between Jalan Semangat and Jalan Universiti in Petaling Jaya.

The yellow star that consists of 14 points which symbolised the unity of 13 states of the federation with the federal government in the flags was placed above the yellow crescent (the symbol of Islam) instead of below it.

"It is tantamount to desecration of the national flag," a disgusted man who declined to be named told Bernama.

However Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir when met by reporters at the National Day celebration at Dataran Merdeka here today said it could have been an oversight.

Abdul Kadir said the mistake could be due to the great hurry to finish the flag.

He said this type of mistake should be avoided in future.

"However this may be only a small matter, what is important is that the people hoisted the flag which proved their nationalistic spirit," he said.

Jalur Gemilang is the name of the Malaysian flag and this was proclaimed by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, on Aug 31, 1997, on the occasion of the 40th National Day at Dataran Merdeka.

Abdul Kadir said the people renewed their patriotism at every National Day and the majority of Malaysians flew the Jalur Gemilang.

He said checks in Kuala Lumpur showed that after the celebrations at the Dataran Merdeka last night, most people particularly the young were seen proudly carrying around the Jalur Gemilang.

"This is the type of attitude in which we take great pride. Moreover since the fly-the-Jalur Gemilang campaign was launched this year, the people began to fly the national flag even though initially the response was lukewarm," he said.

Abdul Kadir said flying the Jalur Gemilang apart from displaying patriotism, could also unite the people of various races in the country in the true Malaysian spirit.

Displaying the Jalur Gemilang on cars, buildings, shops, lamp posts and other places had become a tradition, he said.

He said tourists had also made it a point to visit the country during the National Day celebrations.

-- BERNAMA

RZS ES AAM