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Nip militancy at all costs

THE use of arms to advance a cause or to topple the Government is not the Malaysian way. History is replete with examples of the reprehensible consequences of such actions and the sufferings they cause to innocent people. All peace-loving citizens must condemn violence in whatever form.

Naturally, we are concerned that some individuals have forged links with militant groups abroad with the intention of committing violence in Malaysia. This cannot be condoned and they must be stopped at all cost in the interest of the nation's security and stability.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad revealed on Saturday that the eight individuals arrested on Thursday under the Internal Security Act in a nationwide operation for alleged involvement in an Islamic militant cell had intentions to commit violence in the country. This includes robbery and bombing. Two more were arrested on Friday and Saturday under the ISA.

He also disclosed links between certain Pas members and foreign militant groups such as the Taliban in Afghanistan, saying some members of an opposition party were known to have received training there.

The militant Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia members are believed to have been trained in mountain warfare tactics employed by guerilla fighters, or had fought in the jihad wars in Afghanistan.

The Government is left with no alternative but to detain those involved because of the implications and possible consequences. Certainly, there is no place for the likes of such people in a democracy like Malaysia. Our people have lived in peace for decades and no one should be allowed to disrupt the harmony and sacrifice it for a selfish few.

The means employed by these militants do not justify the end. Malaysia has always been known among its neighbours and friends for its stability and as such, we have to preserve our efforts to this end. As the economy improves and we continue wooing foreign investors to our shores, we must ensure the pull factors remain intact.

If certain elements are not happy with the Government of the day, there is always the ballot box to turn to. It is the people who voted in the current administration and it is through the voice of the majority - not a few trouble-makers - that changes can be made. And these must be done according to the rule of law.

The police are aware of what they were doing when they arrested the individuals under the ISA. The danger that these militants pose necessitated such action, for our uniformed personnel are duty bound to maintain law and order and peace and harmony in the country.

The police have been monitoring their activities since a botched bank robbery in May this year and a few other incidents in different parts of the country, which claimed some innocent lives too.

As citizens who abide by law and order, we must not tolerate any brand of extremism or combative tactics aimed at overthrowing the Government.

Any such attempt will shatter the peace and tranquility which make it possible for the people to go about their daily life without fear. Chaos and anarchy will benefit no one except the country's enemies. We must therefore plug all sources of trouble before they lead us to ruin.

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