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PM: We could not have done it without support

Farush Khan

IPOH, Fri. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight said the Government was indebted to the people at all levels, saying that without their effort and co-operation, the country would not be what it is today.

He said people such as government officers, businessmen and the ordinary people alike had made efforts to contribute towards the country's development.

"Without their efforts, it will be impossible for the Government to obtain sufficient revenue (to implement projects)," he said at a dinner with the people at the State Secretariat tonight.

About 1,000 people from all walks of life attended the dinner. Also present was Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali.

The Prime Minister said the development of the country had been very rapid so that even foreigners considered Malaysia a developed nation.

He cited the 850km highway from Johor Baru to Bukit Kayu Hitam, the dual carriageway to Padang Besar, the Kuala Lumpur International Airport and other major projects as some of the successes of the country.

Port Klang, he said, was now the 11th biggest port in the world.

"All these we can do provided the people continue to realise their responsibilities towards the country."

Dr Mahathir said that everyone would gain from all the projects in various ways.

He said those who got less should not be envious of those who got more because those who get more pay more taxes.

He added that if people understood their responsibilities, they would not waste their time organising unnecessary activities such as riots or demonstrations to express their dissatisfaction.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia was a democratic country whereby dissatisfaction could be expressed through proper channels.

"They must also remember that in a democratic country, the voice of the majority must be respected," he said.

On racial harmony, Dr Mahathir said the clashes (in Kampung Medan which had resulted in six deaths and scores injured), did not influence others to have racial feelings with each other.

He said what had happened was considered a "crime" and not a racial problem.

Meanwhile, Bernama reports from Parit Buntar, that Dr Mahathir had a meeting with Parit Buntar and Bagan Serai Umno division members at Dewan Merdeka earlier today.

The Umno president explained current party issues at the closed-door meeting which lasted about two hours.

He was accompanied by Tajol Rosli, who is State Umno liaison chief, Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob and Deputy Home Minister Datuk Zainal Abidin Zin.

Present were Parit Buntar Umno division head Abdul Rahman Sulaiman and Bagan Serai Umno division head Datuk Qamarulzaman Ismail.

The Umno president was escorted by about 400 Umno Youth members on motor bikes to the meeting hall.

After the meeting, he presented a contribution to Suhaya Abdul Rahman, 35, widow of former Parit Buntar Umno division secretary Yusoff Ahmd, who died of a heart attack on March 17.

Dr Mahathir performed Friday prayers at the Parit Buntar district mosque before departing for Parit in a helicopter.

In Parit, Dr Mahathir held a 90-minute closed-door meeting with about 2,000 members of Umno branches in the Parit and Beruas divisions at the Parit district council hall.

Party members turned up in full force to greet the Prime Minister despite the heavy rain.

After the meeting, Dr Mahathir had tea with the people before going to Ipoh to attend a dinner.

In line with the people-friendly concept promoted by the government, Dr Mahathir dined with village heads, penghulus and State Barisan Nasional (BN) component party leaders.

Some 700 guests, including representatives from non-governmental organisations, attended the dinner.