

31 JULY 2001

Warriors-Publicity

WARRIORS' DAY OBSERVANCE DESERVES WIDER PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

KUALA LUMPUR, July 31 (Bernama) -- Blaming poor publicity for the perennial lack of public participation in commemorating Warriors' Day, the Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said it is time that Malaysians observe the day every July 31 in more meaningful ways.

Remembering the nation's fallen heroes should benefit the sacrifices by those who gave the country their lives, Najib said.

As for the public, there should be more to observing Warriors' Day than merely regarding it as a wreath-laying, bugle-blowing and poem-reciting ritual at heroes monuments, he said.

"As we remember our fallen heroes on July 31 we must also contribute in cash and kind as token of our genuine appreciation of their services," he said when approached by reporters after attending this year's Warriors' Day commemoration at the National Monument here.

Ex-servicemen also needed financial assistance, job opportunities and other facilities when they returned to civilian life and this was where the public could come in, at least on Warriors' Day, he said.

Najib said he was convinced that if Warriors' Day observance was given widest publicity, Malaysians at large would honour their fallen heroes in a big way.

"Wide publicity is needed to impress upon the citizenry the significance of celebrating Warriors' Day," he said.

Creating such awareness also required enlightening younger Malaysians on the country's struggle for independence and how servicemen sacrificed to preserve the country's sovereignty, said Najib.

Ex-Servicemen Association of Malaysia president Senator Datuk Mohamad Abdul Ghani, who was also approached after today's ceremony, said he wished to see large public attendance at future Warriors' Day observance.

"We are not doing enough in observing the day. It's just remembrance. We have to do more," he said.

Several out-of-towners visiting the National Monument confessed during a random survey that they were unaware the nation commemorated Warriors' Day today.

"I only knew about it when I asked fellow visitors why are there so many wreaths today," said head of a Johor Baharu family visiting the monument.

Earlier, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Chief of Defence Forces Gen Tan Sri Mohamed Zahidi Zainuddin and the Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Norian Mai, among others, laid wreaths at the monument.

-- BERNAMA

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