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Merdeka-Prayers

AGONG AND DR MAHATHIR ATTEND FRIDAY PRAYERS AT NATIONAL MOSQUE

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 30 (Bernama) -- Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Putra Jamalullail, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and several cabinet ministers attended Friday prayers at the National Mosque today where a special sermon was delivered in conjunction with the 45th National Day.

In his sermon, National Mosque Imam Datuk Pirdaus Ismail called on all Muslims to pool resources against internal or external threats that could jeopardise their faith or the wellbeing and security of the country.

He said the people's sacrifice whether in terms of their lives or resources to defend the country's independence was a part of jihad which was greatly appreciated by the religion.

"Islam demands its followers to be prepared to sacrifice to set up an independent nation," he said in his sermon. The text of the sermon was also read at all mosques throughout the country.

Pirdaus said the sacrifices of patriots who had brought independence to the country such as political leaders, intellectuals and ulamas should not be forgotten as the prosperity enjoyed by the present generation had been achieved through their struggles.

He said after independence, the various races in the country had lived in peace through the government's policy of freedom of religion and culture.

Even the international community had acknowledged Malaysia's ability and had frequently referred to the nation as being a successful third world country, he said.

"But we should not be complacent, we should always be cautious. Islam all over the world has been given a negative identity and a bad image," he said.

Pirdaus feared that the misconception and negative picture on Islam could affect stability and racial harmony in Malaysia.

Thus, he called on Muslims to show the best example to the plural society in this country through mutual understanding and respect and to avoid things that could lead to racial misunderstanding and to resolve problems openly.

-- BENAMA

RZS AHH AO