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Mahathir-Culture

M'SIANS MUST DISCARD NEGATIVE CULTURAL TRAITS TO PROGRESS, SAYS PM

REMBAU, Jan 3 (Bernama) -- Multi-racial Malaysians will have to discard their negative cultural traits and stick to the positive ones in their pursuit of greater advancement as a nation, the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"We hope there is a sense of responsibility to our race by displaying willingness to remove negative traits in our cultures and willingness to accept superior traits which can lead us to progress," he said.

The prime minister was addressing an Aidilfitri get-together at the National Civics Bureau's spiritual upliftment camp in Ulu Sepri here today.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir delivered a two-and-a-half hour talk to 86 senior government officers, corporate figures and key individuals taking part in a four-day premier resilience-building course since Saturday.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians would have to learn from the other world cultures given that some races, which were once very advanced, later suffered decline and became backward and vice versa.

Dr Mahathir told the Aidilfitri get-together, he was convinced that Malaysians could achieve greatness on a higher plane if there was willingness to part with counter-productive cultural traits.

Towards this end, Dr Mahathir said it would be good if Malaysians could discern and learn from the rise and fall of the Mongols, the Russians and even the Islamic empire.

"I have read that the Mongols were once nomadic and shifting live-stock rearers and fragmented into scores of sub-ethnic groups until a leader named Genghis Khan came along.

"With iron-fist rule Genghis Khan succeeded in applying military might to unify the Mongols into becoming a nation," he said.

While the Mongols were initially primitive, Genghis Khan managed to turn them into a united people whose strength was their unity, Dr Mahathir said.

"This enabled Genghis Khan to motivate them even into giving their lives for the Mongol's conquest of the world," he said.

The division also mounted roadblocks jointly manned by security agencies like the Anti-Smuggling Unit, General Operations Force and the customs to check rice smuggling, he said.

Hassan said 168,780kg of Thai rice worth RM236,292 and 20 cars were seized from roadblocks, stores and jungle fringes in operations carried out in the past three weeks.

He said the division would step up enforcement to curb smuggling and instil awareness among the people living along the Malaysia-Thailand border to provide information on smuggling activities.

"With close cooperation from the people, we're confident to reduce smuggling considerably," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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