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Mahathir-People

PM REMINDS THE PEOPLE NOT TO SACRIFICE INDEPENDENCE

BUKIT MERTAJAM, Nov 2 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reminded the people to unite to draw up and determine the country's future.

He said it was the responsibility of the rakyat and all leaders to determine the country's future so that the next generation could benefit from the development carried out.

Speaking at the "Leader With the People" gathering at the Maktab Perguruan Tuanku Bainun ground here today, he said even if there were conflicts, the people should not neglect their responsibility in building a developed nation.

He said the people should not put the country's independence at stake just because of minor conflicts because it was the responsibility of the people as a whole to preserve independence.

"Don't act in a manner that could destroy the country's future just because of minor disputes as such irresponsible acts could cost the country's independence," he said.

The Prime Minister said that in the era of globalisation, foreign powers were attempting to recolonise the country and if this was allowed to happen, it would take more than 400 years to recover.

"We had been colonised for 450 years before we attained independence and if we allow the country to be colonised again, we may possibly have to wait for more than 450 years to gain independence again," he said.

He said what was important was the effort to provide the next generation with a prosperous nation so that they would not be disappointed with the leaders before their time.

He said the government always strived to reduce the gap between the races and ensured that the Malays could prosper together with the other races in the country.

"Malaysia will emerge as a developed nation with a progressive community without differentiating the advantages of any ethnic community, in fact, the people of all races must work together, enjoy together and live comfortably together," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that was also the reason why the government decided to introduce English language in the teaching of science and mathematics because the Malays must be able to master both subjects.

He said the Malays were weak in science and mathematics and they should be exposed to the two subjects through a good command of English as hundreds of books and journals were produced daily on these subjects by western countries.

He said the claim that the government was brushing aside the Malay language did not arise because the Malays would not lose their identity just because they were smart and could master the English language well.

Dr Mahathir also said that the government was convinced that the people could make a smart decision in choosing a government that could bring development to the country and the next generation.

At the function attended by more than 20,000 people, the Prime Minister reiterated that he would stick to his decision to retire in October next year and would hand over his post to his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

He said Abdullah was the most suitable candidate to take over the Prime Minister's post and he was confident that the support given to him would

also be given to Abdullah.

--BERNAMA

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