

Zam regrets tribute misconstrued

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Zainuddin Maidin has expressed regret that the tribute by Malaysians to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been misconstrued by certain parties as though the people were "idol-worshipping" him.

The Deputy information Minister said: "This is the view of fanatics and therefore it should be ignored."

Malaysians' recognition of Dr Mahathir was a spontaneous effort due to his contribution to the country over the past 22 years, he said.

A publication had reported that the tribute to Dr Mahathir was as though the people were idol-worshipping him.

"The tribute to him is not only from Malaysians but also from leaders overseas," he said after opening a competition on Patriotic Recollections here yesterday.

He added that Dr Mahathir would go

down in history as a great national leader.

On another matter, Zainuddin expressed regret that the writings of first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman had not been translated into Bahasa Malaysia, adding that the youths would miss out on the contributions and thoughts of Tunku.

"We must not forget history and our leaders' contributions," he said, adding that for this reason, the people should not be mistaken that communists were also nationalists.

"The communists never took part in the nationalistic fervour of wanting to get independence. Let us not be fooled by historians who state communists were nationalists.

"The fight for independence was not by communists or socialists but by true nationalists," Zainuddin added.

Recollecting the nation's history in the right spirit was vital in instilling patriotism among Malaysians, he said.