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Mahathir-Independence

DON'T BE COMPLACENT, NEW COLONIALISM THREATENS M'SIA - MALAYS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight reminded Malaysians, especially the Malays, not to be complacent in enjoying the success and prosperity from the nation's independence to the extent of forgetting that they are being threatened by a new form of colonialism which is more dangerous.

"We must be aware of the danger we are facing now which is no less serious from that faced when fighting the colonialists before," the Prime Minister said.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno President, said Malaysia was facing the danger of colonisation by the superpower, which was prepared to act more violently and unfairly.

"They want to oppress us. Look what has happen in Afghanistan, Iraq and the threat issued against Syria. Don't think only Islamic countries in the Arab region are facing such pressures.

"If we are weak, they (super power) will try to topple Umno because the party is the pillar of defence for the country's independence and sovereignty," he said when speaking at Umno's 57th anniversary celebrations at the Merdeka Stadium, here.

Dr Mahathir reminded the people to reminisce the sacrifices made by the older generation and past leaders in fighting the colonial masters to gain independence for the country.

"While we can enjoy now because the country has attained independence and has seen rapid development, it will be good if we look back to see our origins...reflect on the early struggles of Umno and on the leaders who formed Umno," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians, particularly the Malays must weigh their current status and be always grateful to the progress they have achieved so far.

"Indeed, we have succeeded, but can we say that we have really succeeded because an easy life will usually make people weak," he said.

He said Malaysians must be always prepared to face challenges by upgrading their skills and talents; harden their resolve and self-resilience without being blinded by the prosperity enjoyed.

Dr Mahathir said the hardship suffered when the country was under colonial rule had ignited the Malay nationalism to develop the country and to prove to the British colonial masters that the Malays were capable of administrating their own country.

He said the British claimed that the Malays were only good at catching fish and farming but did not have the knowledge to be given positions in government administration.

However, their claims were proven wrong when the Malays proved that they were talented and were capable of running an independent nation to the extent that Malaysia had developed at a rapid pace.

"In fact, more developed from the country of the colonialist.

"We have developed Malaysia to the extent that sometimes it has been regarded as a developed nation.

"An independent Malaysia under the government led by Umno has succeeded in developing the country far advanced from the government of the colonialist," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had attained the level of development that developed countries had to respect and recognise its success.

"All these can be done with the unity in Umno and efficient administration," he said, adding that the recognition of the developed countries were proven when Malaysia was invited for a meeting with the Group of Eight (G8) Developed Countries at the end of this month or early next month.

"We are chosen in our capacity as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Chairman to negotiate with the G8 developed countries.

"Previously, there were non-aligned countries but they were not invited to negotiate. This is a recognition to NAM and also to Malaysia," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this was among the success attained by Malaysia at international level apart from recognition to Malaysian companies, especially Petronas and Malay individuals who have been listed as among the billionaires in the world.

Dr Mahathir reminded Malaysians to shed the attitude of being too dependent on the assistance of others, especially the government, to succeed.

The Prime Minister said: "Now we feel relieved and we think there is no need to work anymore...thinking the government will help us and we merely depend on handouts.

"That's not the way because it will weaken us. If we seek easy ways, we will not know how to fight the tide and eventually we will become a weak race.

"A weak race will be defeated easily and will be recolonised. We know that in 1945 we opposed the Malayan Union but today we are not aware of the dangers we are facing," he said.

Dr Mahathir reminded the Malays that their struggles were far from over although attempts to set up the Malayan Union had been thwarted, the country had gained independence and Malaysia had seen rapid development.

"If we are not careful, we will be attacked again. The younger generation in Umno must remember that the party's struggles are not for personal gains but for the race, religion and country. This is Umno's struggle," he said.

To ensure Umno's strength and the country's stability, Dr Mahathir asked party members to close ranks within Umno, Barisan Nasional and among the people.

He said they should acquire knowledge and equip themselves to face the challenges ahead.

"God will not change the fate of a race unless they themselves strive to better themselves. This is our responsibility.

"Shouts of "Allahuakbar" (God Is Great) alone is not enough if we do not equip ourselves with the knowledge to tackle the challenges," he said.

He said the people should defend the country's independence and sovereignty in whatever ways possible if they had the love and affection for their own country.

"Malaysia belongs to all of us. We are duty bound to defend the country. We are the ones who will enjoy the fruit of the independence of our beloved nation," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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