

29 MAY 2003

Mahathir-Keamatan

DR MAHATHIR AND WIFE SEND "KEAMATAN" FESTIVAL GREETINGS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali have sent their greetings to the Kadazandusun and Murut communities who are celebrating the "Keamatan" Festival in Sabah, tomorrow.

The Prime Minister said the festival to celebrate harvesting day for the Kadazandusun and Murut communities was also known to the other communities in Malaysia, and the government, he said, had recognised the Keamatan Festival as an official celebration for the state of Sabah.

"This shows that the country does not discriminate against or marginalise any ethnic group in Malaysia in practising their customs, tradition or beliefs," he said in a message in conjunction with the festival, here today.

He said Malaysians, whether from the majority or minority race, actually enjoyed the same treatment like everyone else.

The Malaysians respected each other's customs and traditions and this had turned Malaysia into a unique nation that had impressed the foreign communities, he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Keamatan Festival had been celebrated from before to express the community's gratitude for the good harvest made and he urged the people to be thankful that they could still celebrate the festival without any obstacle.

"Today, we should also be thankful that as Malaysians, we are most fortunate to be able to practise our customs and traditions as well as beliefs without any problem or hindrances," he said.

In conjunction with the festival, the prime minister reminded Malaysians to take the opportunity to know and understand the customs and traditions of the various races.

--BERNAMA

RAM RAM AO