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Mahathir-Formula

UPHOLD FORMULA OF TOLERANCE FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS, SAYS MAHATHIR

MIRI, July 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Malaysians must continue to uphold the formula of tolerance and respect for each other's culture and religion to ensure the country's progress and stability.

He said that this was the winning formula promoted by Malaysia's first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, who had led the country to attain independence after a long episode of colonization.

"It does not matter who's going to become the next prime minister or chief minister but the people must always uphold this formula of tolerance to ensure the country's peace, progress and prosperity," he said when opening the new RM210 million terminal building of the Miri Airport.

Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud and Puan Sri Laila Taib, Transport Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy and state dignitaries were present.

Dr Mahathir said that it was the responsibility of every citizen to uphold this formula so that the country's progress and development would continue to benefit the future generations.

The prime minister said that a deep sense of responsibility among the people was also most essential in the country's pursuit of progress and prosperity.

"The people, workers, trade unions, companies, government employees, the police and armed forces in the country have all displayed this attitude towards the country," he said.

For instance, he said, the trade unions had not resorted to strikes and riots in demanding for the rights of workers and this had attracted investors and companies to embark on business and trade ventures in the country.

"From the profits of companies, we collect 28 per cent in tax and this we use for the country's development like the construction of airports and provide assistance to the poor and disabled.

"As such, we should not harbour ill will towards those who are rich as they make significant contributions towards the country's development including opening up ventures which create employment opportunities for the people especially the poor to earn a living," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that Sarawak was most fortunate as the state was blessed with abundant natural resources like oil and the Sarawakians had also readily exercised their wisdom in choosing a strong government.

"Sarawak is a rapidly developing state, more developed than some of the states in the peninsula because the people have chosen the Barisan Nasional government which is strong," he said.

The prime minister said that if the Sarawak BN had won by only one seat in the state election, its leaders would surely be too busy planning political strategies as the government could collapse at any time.

"But as the BN is strong, focus could be given to the task of developing the state and the people instead of being involved in wasteful political activities," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the people should also give their support to the leaders capable of running the state.

-- BERNAMA

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