

**Do Not Associate Army With Politics**  
**Malaysianmirror.com**  
**March 1, 2011**

KUALA LUMPUR -- Do not associate the army with politics, said army chief Gen Zulkifeli Mohd Zin.

He said the army's involvement in nation-building was merely to support the government's efforts to enhance the well-being of the people and it had nothing to do with politics.

"As our involvement in nation building affect the welfare of the people, this may been misinterpreted or deliberately distorted by certain quarters.

"Although I am a soldier, this does not mean that I do not bother about politics... but I am not involved in politics. I keep abreast with political development to keep myself well-informed," he told reporters after delivering a message in conjunction with the 78th anniversary of the army at the Sungai Besi Camp here today.

Brushing aside attempts to link the army with politics as a ploy to lower the credibility of the army, he said the main responsibility of the army was to defend the country and support government's efforts.

On the army's capability, he said the army would spend according to its budget in bolstering the forces.

"If there are sophisticated hardware and systems that we can afford, certainly we need to go shopping. It's like an insurance policy, if you pay a premium, then you are protected by policy which commensurate with the money spent," he said.

Earlier in his message, he said the development of the army's main asset - the soldiers - should keep in steps with changing times.

"However sophisticated the equipment we have, if we do not have competent personnel to handle it, then everything is futile. So I emphasise on training and I hope the army will continue to develop and progress," he said.

Zulkifeli also presented Pingat Jasa Malaysia, Pingat Perkhidmatan Setia and Ketua Perkhidmatan PTD certificates to army officers and three civilian staff.

Deputy army chief Lt. Gen. Zulkifli Zainal Abidin and army field commander Lt. Gen. Ahmad Hasbullah Mohd Nawawi were present.

(Bernama)

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Source : <http://www.malaysianmirror.com/media-buzz-detail/6-nation/52201>