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Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (centre) paying a visit to the Semai Bakti Desa Kencana Hall, which had been converted into living quarters for soldiers in Lahad Datu, Sabah, yesterday. Pic by Fathil Asri

'Security forces' spirit unbeatable'

NST-18/3/2013

LAHAD DATU: "Don't bite the hand that feeds you."

Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said this yesterday, referring to the Suluks, adding that Malaysia had been very accommodating to people from neighbouring countries.

"They are our friends. We let them live here for so long but, unfortunately, there are some who harbour ill intentions towards us," he said, adding that there was also a vast number of Suluks here who were

against the intrusion by their own people from Sulu.

Dr Mahathir said this while paying a visit to security forces at the police tactical centre at Dewan Bakti Semai Kencana in Felda Sahabat.

He expressed his gratitude to the security forces for putting their lives on the line to protect the sovereignty of the country.

"It is a big sacrifice and you are carrying out your responsibilities well, while facing a huge challenge."

He went on to say that critics of

the security forces had to eat their own words as their "spirit was unbeatable".

"Some people say we don't have the capabilities. Although there are some casualties on our side, we have proven them wrong."

Dr Mahathir praised the men in the security forces for being in high spirits despite the many challenges they faced.

"What I see here today are faces of people who are eager to protect the country.

"As long as we have the spirit to fight for our country, we will be safe."

He lashed out at those who claimed the whole incident was staged, saying that the danger was "very real".

"Ten of our people have died. We are facing a huge danger here. They (the intruders) are dangerous. Their ways are cruel," he said, adding that Malaysia would continue hunting them down until they laid down their weapons and admitted defeat.