

A MALAYSIAN RESPONSIBILITY

PM: MAINTAINING PEACE A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

'If we're rational, open minded, we won't be influenced by attempts to weaken unity'

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ALL Malaysians must be aware of their responsibility to maintain peace and harmony amid ethnic, cultural and religious diversity for the sake of the country's progress and stability.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said efforts to strengthen unity did not rest solely on the shoulders of the federal or state governments as it was a collective responsibility.

"We know there are attempts to weaken our unity. This was done by our own people. The narrative used is often related to emotional matters, especially involving race, religion and ethnicity.

"It's very easy for us to get caught up in these issues because they are so close to our hearts. But if we are rational and open minded, we will not be influenced.

"(Malaysia) has been together as a family for more than five decades. I believe the majority of Malaysians reject this narrow and frivolous mindset and will continue to remain united."

He said besides preserving unity, keeping the country clean and corruption-free was crucial too.

He said the theme of this year's National Day and Malaysia Day celebrations, "Sayangi Malaysiaku: Malaysia Bersih", aimed to remind the people of the need to keep Malaysia "clean".

"We have witnessed how the country was almost destroyed by corruption and abuse of power.

Although we have managed to get rid of the kleptocracy, it doesn't stop there. We need to continue to combat corruption in all aspects," he told a 10,000-strong crowd at the 56th national-level Malaysia Day celebration at Stadium Perpaduan here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said the Pakatan Harapan government was committed and sincere in its wish to restore Sabah's and Sarawak's rights in line with the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63).

He said although the Constitution Bill (Amendment 2019) to restore the status of Sabah and Sarawak as equal partners with the Federation of Malaya failed to get the required two-thirds majority support in the Dewan Rakyat in April, the government remained committed to realising the two states' demands.

The special cabinet steering committee to review the MA63 and return the management of Pulau Sipadan and Pulau Ligitan