

'Be grateful for the democracy we enjoy' - Dr M

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KUALA LUMPUR, June 14 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight urged Malaysians to be always grateful for the democracy they enjoy, and take note of what happens to their Muslim brothers elsewhere in the world when the democracy they desire does not work out.

Malaysians are still able to undergo the Ramadan fast and celebrate Aidilfitri safely and in comfort without having to worry about or feel threatened by enemy attacks, he said.

"Let us ponder on our current challenges and expectations, and how we can overcome them. God willing, our efforts and never-say-die attitude will receive the blessings of Allah (God) and we will surely overcome all obstacles."

"Trust me, what we are facing now is not as difficult as what our friends in several other countries, especially in the Middle East, have to put up with," he said in his Hari Raya Aidilfitri message.

Dr Mahathir, who described the first day of Syawal as a day of victory over cravings, said overcoming the desires was not restricted to withstanding hunger and thirst but resisting all matters contrary to the teachings of Islam.

"There are times when the cravings thrust us into doing things which are prohibited, which tarnish our image as Muslims, but, Alhamdulillah (Praise be to God), Islam is perfect."

"If observed with care, it will make us good and successful. Islam is not just a religion, it is 'Ad-deen' or a way of life," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government pledges to strive hard to put the country back on track.

"In order to achieve this objective, it has to exercise thrift and the people have to accept the need to be thrifty as well along with the government," he said.

If the country is peaceful and safe, the investors will invest heavily and the employment opportunities will increase and the unemployment problem among the people will be solved, he said.

Dr Mahathir reminded people returning to their hometowns and villages to drive carefully, and called on non-Muslims to join in the Aidilfitri celebration to boost racial unity in the country.

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