

MAHATHIR-LAW

32
KUALA LUMPUR, OCT. 26 (BERNAMA) -- /DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD GAVE AN ASSURANCE TODAY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL FAITHFULLY DO ITS DUTY AS PRESCRIBED BY THE CONSTITUTION AND RESPECT THE RIGHTS GUARANTEED BY IT FOR THE DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF THE FEDERATION, THE MINORITIES, THE CITIZENS AND IN SOME CASES, THE NON-CITIZENS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE CONSTITUTION WAS HOWEVER, NOT INFALLIBLE AND HENCE IT PROVIDED FOR AMENDMENTS TO MAKE IT COMPATIBLE WITH CHANGING TIMES.

+BUT THE CONDITIONS FOR AMENDMENTS ARE SUCH THAT THE CONSTITUTION CANNOT BE TRIFLED WITH AT WILL,+ HE ADDED WHEN OPENING THE THIRD ASEAN LAW ASSOCIATION (ALA) GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE DEWAN TUNKU CANCELLOR HERE.

EXPRESSING HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE LAW, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT FIRST, HE BELIEVED IN THE SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION. A WRITTEN CONSTITUTION WAS ESSENTIAL IN A FEDERATION, ESPECIALLY ONE WITH A MULTI-RACIAL, MULTI-LINGUAL MULTI-RELIGIOUS AND MULTI-CULTURAL POPULATION.

+EVERYONE CONCERNED, NOT ONLY THOSE IN GOVERNMENT, MUST RESPECT AND UPHOLD IT,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE 1245/IB
NNNN

MAHATHIR-LAW 2 KUALA LUMPUR

SECONDLY, HE AFFIRMED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE RULE OF LAW, HE SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE THAT THE LAW PLAYED IN PROTECTING LIFE AND LIMB, LIBERTY AND PROPERTY OF CITIZENS.

HE SAID: +NO MAN IS ABOVE THE LAW, NOT EVEN THOSE IN POWER. THOSE IN POWER ARE IN FACT TRUSTEES AND THEIR DUTY IS TO PROMOTE THE PUBLIC GOOD, NOT SELF-ENRICHMENT.+

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO SAID THAT HE WOULD ALWAYS RESPECT THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY AND WOULD SEE TO IT THAT IT WOULD BE GIVEN WHAT IT REALLY NEEDED BY WAY OF MANPOWER AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES TO ENABLE IT TO ADMINISTER JUSTICE EXPEDITIOUSLY AND EFFICIENTLY.

+WE DO NOT EXPECT THE COURTS TO BE PRO OR ANTI GOVERNMENT, ONLY PRO THE CONSTITUTION AND PRO THE LAW,+ HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNMENT ALWAYS CONSIDERED THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAW CAREFULLY BEFORE DOING ANYTHING SO IT EXPECTED THE JUDICIARY TO BE FREE TO JUDGE ALLEGED TRESPASSES WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION, THE LAW OF EVIDENCE AND PROCEDURE, JUSTLY AND FAIRLY. -- MORE 1250/IB
NNNN

ZCZC NO27: (F)
MAHATHIR -LAW 3 KUALA LUMPUR

HE SAID: + WE SHALL ALWAYS RESPECT THEIR JUDGMENTS. BUT THE RIGHT TO MAKE LAWS MUST NECESSARILY BE THAT OF THE LEGISLATURE.+
DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR THEN SAID THAT HE WOULD ALWAYS RESPECT THE BAR AND THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND HE PROMISED +THAT NO MEMBER OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION WOULD EVER BE PENALISED IN THE COURSE OF DISCHARGING THEIR DUTIES.+ THERE WAS LOUD APPLAUSE.

THE FIVE-DAY ASSEMBLY IS BEING ATTENDED BY ABOUT 750 PARTICIPANTS COMPRISING CHIEF JUSTICES, MINISTERS OF JUSTICE, LAWYERS AND LAW TEACHERS FROM THE FIVE ASEAN COUNTRIES OF INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, THE PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE AND THAILAND, AND OBSERVERS FROM