

The corrupt will be exposed, says Mahathir

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PENANG, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight that the Government is determined to expose corrupt civil servants and deviations in Government agencies and departments despite attempts by certain quarters to undermine its anti-graft drive.

This is in line with the Barisan Nasional's 1982 election slogan of a 'Clean, Efficient and Trustworthy Government'.

Dr Mahathir said the 'corrupted elements' had

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claimed that the Government's anti-corruption drive was in the interests of "certain people in the Government" and that the investigators themselves were corrupted.

He was speaking to about 15,000 people at the Malam Rakyat dinner at Padang Kota Lama.

Dr Mahathir said the allegations were a ploy to "throw us off the scent" and likened the culprits to a thief, who, on being pursued, would scream "thief! thief!" in the hope that innocent bystanders

would be mistakenly apprehended.

Although the Government is weeding out the corrupt, the exercise will take time as the laws of the country must be followed.

The Prime Minister also reminded Malaysians that they should not be corrupted by their own power.

In a democratic country, he added, the people had the power to choose the Government

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and should use it to support policies that would benefit the people.

He also told the people to value the country's independence and strive to promote racial harmony, which has been established by former Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman.

He said the Barisan Government was very similar to the Alliance Government in its multi-racialism, although the style of doing things was a little different.

Progressive

On the economic situation, Dr Mahathir urged the people to bear with the Government during the recession.

They should increase productivity and tighten their belts in order to be in a better position to reap rewards when the economy recovers.

The Government, on its part, will spend money prudently and not carry out projects for only certain groups nor implement projects which the people do not want.

Also present at the dinner were Chief Minister Dr Lim Chong Eu, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Penang's first Chief Minister Tan Sri Wong Pow Nee, Education Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Agriculture Minister Anwar Ibrahim.

Earlier, speaking on arrival for a two-day official visit, the Prime Minister said Malaysia was one of the most progressive newly-emerged nations.

He urged the people not only to be proud of this achievement, but to endeavour to progress further.

"In some countries, people are fighting each other and some disputes just cannot be settled."

After 29 years of Merdeka, Malaysians, in spite of differing views and opinions, have built a strong and united nation which is respected by the world.

He told the gathering of 15,000 at the airport that it was not easy for any Government to win the full cooperation of a multi-racial society, adding that the progress of a country did not depend solely on the leadership, but also on the attitude of the people.