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Mahathir-communities

GOVERNMENT FAIR TO ALL COMMUNITIES, SAYS MAHATHIR

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KOTA BAHARU, July 26 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the country's progress was the result of the government's effort of looking after the interests of all communities.

"We do not oppress the Chinese, Indians and other communities while giving priority to the Malays...we distribute the wealth to all," the prime minister said at a Kelantan Barisan Nasional (BN) gathering at the Chinese Assembly Hall, here.

He said that with a just administration, the government was able to bring the people of all races and religions together to work for progress.

Dr Mahathir, who is chairman of the Kelantan Umno Liaison Committee, said there were countries with multi-racial and multi-religious populations which could not enjoy peace.

He said most of these countries faced racial problems which resulted in riots and civil war. -- more

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He said that in some countries, oppression of the people based on race and religion was rampant.

"But in Malaysia, we enjoy peace and many non-Malays live in Malay areas without fear," he said.

Malaysia was also able to develop its economy which was growing at a faster rate than in any other country, he said.

"If we administer the country well without racial problems, development will continue. And if Malaysia prospers, we need not ask for aid from anyone and this would make us free in the international arena to criticise Western countries exploiting Muslims in Bosnia," he said.

Malaysia, he said, need not depend on others because "we are enjoying peace, progress and prosperity, and the leaders are able to administer the country well compared with some other Islamic countries." -- more

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Dr Mahathir said some Islamic countries were unable to help Bosnia because they were indebted to the West. These countries were hoping that Malaysia would voice its protest against the injustice in Bosnia.

As such, it was necessary for a country to be rich and prosperous, he said, adding that Malaysia was not afraid to criticise the West for the injustice it had done to the Muslims in Bosnia.

On unemployment, he said that in fact there was no unemployment in Malaysia and that the four per cent unemployment rate was recorded because some people did not want to work and others worked part time or were self-employed.

He said much of the unemployment was in Kelantan and Sabah because of poor administration in the two states.

Malaysia could also achieve more than eight per cent economic growth but for the lack of development in Kelantan and Sabah, he said. -- more,

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Dr Mahathir also asked Parti Semangat 46 members and leaders to dissolve the party as many of their leaders had left the party to join Umno or voluntary organisations.

He said the opportunity for a Kelantanese to become the country's prime minister was open so long as one had the patience to wait for one's turn.

Dr Mahathir reminded the people that politics was not meant for any individual but for the interest of the nation.

He said Semangat 46 did not have any power in Kelantan and was merely being used by PAS.

The BN's objective was to administer the country fairly and not for the interest of certain people, he said. -- Bernama

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