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Mahathir-opposition

CURB ALL KINDS OF CORRUPTION, DR MAHATHIR TELLS OPPOSITION PARTIES

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KUALA LUMPUR, June 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today opposition parties should emulate UMNO by adopting specific regulations to eradicate money politics and all other kinds of corruption.

The Prime Minister said they should strive to formulate laws to curb all forms of corruption, spiritual and materialistic, and not be overzealous in ridiculing UMNO for its action to curb money politics.

"UMNO's problem is only money politics. But the problems of other parties include manipulating Quranic verses and heaven for self-interest and the party," he said when addressing the UMNO special general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

Dr Mahathir said opposition parties must be honest like UMNO by admitting that wrong-doing and crime happened in their respective parties and act accordingly to eradicate them.

"They should not pat their own back and congratulate themselves, thinking that they are better than UMNO. Actually, they are dirtier," he added. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said he was aware that opposition parties would harp on UMNO's move to amend the party's constitution to curb money politics as an issue to attack UMNO.

He reminded opposition parties that they could not be proud with their belief that they were clean because many of them were involved in corruption.

This was because the problem of money politics in UMNO was the work of a splinter group which was now outside UMNO, he said.

He added: "They can swear but we know they used a lot of money in 1987 to buy votes.

"They gave bribes in hotels, toilets, locked-up members and promised Menteri Besar, minister and deputy minister posts to party members."

Dr Mahathir said money politics was so rampant that one of the group's leaders had said that RM20 million was cheap to be a Prime Minister.

The group's failure in the leadership tussle did not mean that they were clean because, if not for the majority of Umno delegates who could not be bribed, the group would have won the 1987 party elections, he added. --

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He said: "They are dirty. Unfortunately, their dirtiness was passed on to other party members. It is because of 1987 that UMNO now faces the problem of money politics. Because of 1987, UMNO has to convene today's special general assembly."

Dr Mahathir said the group's friends were not free from corruption as they "promised the heaven to get support for the party, which is also a form of corruption."

That kind of corruption was even cheaper and easily made to those who did not fear God but it was more effective among people who were pious, he added.

"The muck of corruption is also splashed on their faces, in fact, more seriously because the bribery is religion. As such, not only are they dirty, they also smear the religion," he said.

Dr Mahathir also chided the group's boldness in pandering Quranic verses to gain something for themselves and for their party instead of propagating Islam or pursuing missionary activities, and this was no different from using money to buy votes. -- more

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"This does not differ from corruption. This is also corruption," he said.

Dr Mahathir said when PAS came to power in Kelantan, the party used government funds to pay allowances to supporters after bribing them with appointment to posts of penghulu, penqgawa and imam, previously held by others.

"This is also a kind of corruption. Thus, it is not UMNO alone which needs to curb and take action to eradicate money politics in the party," he added. -- Bernama

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