

CNS8878

R PE 23-07 00218 E240

REPEAT aae

Mahathir-BN

BN-STYLE COALITION BEST FOR MALAYSIA, SAYS PM

bm

KOTA KINABALU, July 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the coalition government of the Barisan Nasional (BN) was the best system of administration in a cosmopolitan country like Malaysia and that there was no necessity to change it.

The prime minister said the concept of coalition parties of the BN ensured that all communities, including the minority, were represented and enjoyed development.

"Perhaps one day, when we are no longer apprehensive of whether our community is represented or not, we will have one party without any coalition.

"But the time has not come yet because we still harbour apprehension on whether our interests are taken care of in the government or party. It is for this reason that the BN is the best for our country," he said when opening the third congress of the Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat (Akar), a BN component party, at the SMK Kian Kok in Jalan Tuaran here.

Dr Mahathir said the coalition government in Malaysia was unlike those in other countries because the BN component parties contested in the elections as one large party and did not contest against one another. --

more

MOK MGN

▼23/07/16-06MST

U PE 23-07 00161 EA831

aae

Mahathir-BN 2 Kota Kinabalu

Dr Mahathir, who is also chairman of the BN, said the coalition practised the concept of mutual assistance so that all groups would be represented in the government regardless of whether they were large or small communities.

For example, he said, the BN can field a candidate of a minority community in a constituency where the majority of the people were from other communities and yet win the seat.

The same is true when a majority community is split. The BN can depend on the help of the minority community to ensure victory in a constituency, he said.

"Therefore, we help one another. The important thing is that we support the BN candidate," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he hoped that the BN concept would be well fostered in Sabah so that all the people were accorded equal treatment. -- more

MOK MGN

▼23/07/15-32MST

aae

Mahathir-BN 3 Kota Kinabalu

"Some people say the Kadazan do not support the BN. I am convinced this is not true. If there are Kadazan who do not support us, it does not mean that we (BN) will not help them," said Dr Mahathir to the applause of the audience.

He said the government would still help them so that they too could enjoy the fruits of development.

However, he added, he hoped that the Kadazan would change in their thinking and return to support the BN.

"Now the BN has several Kadazan parties. There is no reason why they should isolate themselves from the BN. The BN is the symbol of justice for all communities in Malaysia," he said.

He said that to represent the Kadazan community, the BN had appointed Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS) president Datuk Bernard Dompok and Akar deputy president Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan as federal minister and deputy minister respectively and Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) president Datuk Joseph Kurup as a Sabah deputy chief minister. -- more

MOK MGN

▼23/07/15-42MST

CNS0071

U PE 23-07 00182 EA833

aae

Mahathir-BN 4 Kota Kinabalu

Dr Mahathir said he regarded the BN as a unique coalition because it was prepared to accept foes as friends.

"There can come a time when a person who has been detained becomes the deputy prime minister," he said in reference to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who was once detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA).

"We have never harboured hatred. Sometimes, a person does wrong. When he does good, why must we continue to harbour the hatred?" he asked.

He also made reference to Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan, younger brother of former Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan, who was once held under detention but has now joined the BN.

"Although he was under detention, he (Jeffrey) met me on his release and said he understood the BN concept and is now in the BN," he said.

He also said that there is a person who was once Minister of Finance but is now outside the BN. -- more

MOK MGN

▼23/07/15-52MST

CNS8875

U PE 23-07 00166 EA834

aae

Mahathir-BN 5 (last) Kota Kinabalu

"In politics, one can get derailed if one is not able to take care of oneself. But the fallen can rise again. I was once sacked (from Umno) and was able to return.

"We have no hatred against people who oppose us. If they support us, we accept them. We know that they had supported the PBS but they now support the BN, so we accept them," he said.

Dr Mahathir praised Akar for remaining loyal to the BN though it had been less successful in the elections.

He praised the spirit of struggle of Akar president Daruk Mark Koding who lost thrice but was not disheartened and remained with the BN.

Akar, which won only one seat in the state election in February, now has six state assemblymen and two MPs following the crossover of several PBS elected representatives to the party. -- Bernama

MOK MGN