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Mahathir-PPP

BN COMPONENTS MUST SUBSCRIBE TO COALITION'S PHILOSOPHY, SAYS DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 3 (Bernama) -- All Barisan Nasional (BN) components must accept the concept and philosophy of the coalition, otherwise they should not have joined it, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"I feel that any party which becomes a component of the BN should understand the concept and philosophy of its struggle because we move or act as a team," he said when opening the general assembly of the Parti Progresif Penduduk Malaysia (Baru) (PPP) at the Gerakan headquarters here.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said it was the responsibility of every BN component and its members to preserve the good name and unity of the coalition.

He said BN component members should always act in unison in tackling problems and making decisions.

Dr Mahathir said: "BN does not want a situation where a component which is unhappy with something or which disagrees with the majority view turns to the public, which has nothing to do with it, to seek support or sympathy," he said.

He said such an action would not only affect the image of BN as the backbone of the government but would also undermine the unity of the people.

The Prime Minister said using party channels to discuss and settle problems affecting the BN components could prevent outsiders from being dragged into or interfering in these matters.

He said many matters which were thorns in the relations between BN component parties had been resolved amicably without people outside the coalition knowing it.

"The questions of language, Bumiputera rights, religion and politics which frequently become sensitive topics among the races in the country are usually discussed in an atmosphere of full understanding in the BN," he said.

He said this approach had brought political stability which enabled the country to grow rapidly and all the people to enjoy the fruits of development.

On the other hand, no one, not even those claiming their rights, would get anything if there was no political stability and development, he said.

"Twenty percent of a successful enterprise is better than 100 percent of one that fails," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the BN practised true democracy by seeking consensus to settle problems among its components because this would prevent internal problems, or those which directly involve component members or which can affect their position as political parties, from being resolved outside of the BN.

As such, BN members were not seen squabbling or trading accusations in public when they had differences of opinion on any matter, he said.

"This is unlike what is happening among the opposition parties which often use the media to attack each other. Recently we saw how an opposition coalition fell apart after its members traded accusations and criticised each other," he said.

"They indulged in what the English describe as washing dirty linens in public, and this is what we do not want to happen to the BN," he said.

Dr Mahathir said a unique feature of the BN was the freedom given to

all component members to air their views at top-level BN meetings, whether in support of or against any matters raised.

What was required of them was to close ranks and defend what had been agreed to collectively, he said.

Dr Mahathir said he was glad that PPP under the leadership of Datuk M. Kayveas had been progressing and effectively discharging its duty as a BN component party which looked after the people's interest.

In his speech, Kayveas said the PPP was now prepared and able to contribute effectively to national development, and he hoped that the Prime Minister would give its members suitable roles to play in the state and federal governments.

PPP was indebted to fellow BN component members for their solid support for PPP which at one time was on the fringe of the national political arena, the party president said.

Present at the opening were MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, MCA deputy president Datuk Lim Ah Lek and BN secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat. -- BERNAMA

ZAB NHD YBY