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Mahathir-Ideology

WESTERN-STYLED DEMOCRACY HAS FAILED TO BRING DESIRED RESULTS, PM

KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Western-styled democracy has failed to bring the desired results because of overzealousness with democracy.

When political democracy was based on ideologies, in the end it was not democracy, justice and national well-being that were being upheld but rather the ideological beliefs, he said in his speech at the Umno convention held in conjunction with the party's 50th anniversary celebrations at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said that in Western countries where ideology was based on class, their political struggle was not based on merit or the ability to govern but the belief that if they govern, they could give priority to their interests.

"Whether or not these interests coincide with those of the nation is not given much weight," he said.

"Excesses or extremism never begets anything good. Extremism negates all noble values, he said at the convention attended by 2,700 delegates.

Dr Mahathir said that although workers in the West get high wages to the effect that their living standards were as high as those of the rich in developing countries, the unemployment rate was also high and their economic performance declined to a point where they could not compete with countries in the East.

"While it is true that the unemployed in developed countries get more allowances than workers in a developing country, but in a declining economy the government does not have enough funds to finance the increasing number of unemployed," he said.

"Hence, the government's debt increases and the country's economy becomes weaker. When it reaches this stage, economic recovery becomes more difficult to achieve," he said.

He said that today, all democratic countries in the West, which are inclined towards Socialism, suffer economic declines with high numbers of unemployed.

"Hence, those who are said to be Socialist Republics, that is Communist countries said to be fully controlled by workers, suffer even more economic hardships and the plight of their workers is made worst than workers in capitalist countries.

"From being self-employed slaves, these workers become slaves of the administration which are more cruel and oppressive," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that society should be more considerate towards the less fortunate among them with efforts taken to improve the less fortunate so that they too could enjoy reasonably the benefits available in society.

But he said that since no person could live entirely on his own, he should accept certain differences between leaders and followers, the rich and the poor.

"It is not possible that in a society everyone becomes a leader or becomes rich. It is not possible for everyone to be followers for it is impossible to have followers without leaders," he added.

The Prime Minister said that the rule by workers who form the majority of the people and described as democratic therefore did not always bring benefits and justice even to workers.

He said that it was true that in the past leaders often oppress ordinary people but oppression was no longer permissible following

adherence to religious beliefs and enforcement of laws.

One good principle, he said, was that laws did not differentiate between leaders and followers, did not recognise positions, status, rich and poor, male and female and other factors which differentiate the various groups in society.

"With the acceptance of these common principles, it is the law which actually governs, not certain individuals," he added.

The Prime Minister said that even though upholding the principle of the rule of law was generally viewed as fair, laws could be influenced by the cultures and civilisations of societies.

This was seen in the old days when laws deliberately differentiated between members of society along cultural lines and opinions of the era, he added.

Dr Mahathir said that it could be seen that the rule of law was not necessarily fair all the time.

"What is considered fair during one period may not be so at another period. What is viewed as fair by one society may be considered as cruel by another," he said.

Even though the concept of fairness was considered universal, its interpretations on certain matter differ, he added.

He said that the democracy practised in Malaysia was not similar to that in the West which had been democracy a religion as the communist ideology was made a religion.

"Malaysian democracy is not a religion. We are aware of the good in a democratic system but we are not overzealous about it to the point that we accept without questioning everything that is done in the name of democracy," he added. -- BERNAMA

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