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Mahathir-MCA

MAHATHIR PROPOSES REFORMS IN MALAY-CHINESE TIES

KUALA LUMPUR, 6 Julai (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today proposed that the Chinese community make necessary reforms so that cooperation between the MCA and Umno that is between the Chinese and the Malays becomes even closer and more effective.

However the Prime Minister said he did not wish to dwell on the type of reforms as he was confident that sociologists within the Chinese community could study the matter and make the necessary proposals.

The Prime Minister said this would reduce focus on negative issues and highlight the many positive elements, which the Chinese community was enjoying, but tend to be forgotten.

Opening the 43rd MCA Annual General Assembly at Wisma MCA in Jalan Ampang here, Dr Mahathir said Umno and the MCA should be moderate in their attitude and cooperate closely otherwise there would be political tension in the country and the economy would decline.

In such a situation no one would benefit, he added.

"One has only to see the situation in some other countries where extremist attitudes had affected politics and this had destroyed economic progress with no one gaining anything," he said.

More than 2,000 delegates are attending the two-day general assembly.

The Prime Minister said just like the "New Malay", the Chinese community should also reform to meet the Malays and other Bumiputeras halfway.

He urged the Malay and Chinese communities to be conscious of the many benefits they had obtained from the various government policies.

"When we count our blessings we'll tend to become more calm," he said.

"With both communities conscious of the many benefits they have had, our country will continue to be stable and achieve more progress which will be enjoyed by all races," Dr Mahathir said.

He invited the MCA delegates to recall the long history of Umno-MCA cooperation and the splendored results arising from it, for then "we'll be more concerned about preserving this relationship and refrain from raising controversial issues which can disrupt this strong bond of unity."

The Prime Minister said he had to mention this long history of cooperation because many Chinese, particularly the young, seemed unhappy with MCA's moderation and its willingness to work with Umno.

"Many Chinese, particularly in the urban areas wanted the MCA to be more chauvinistic and demand Chinese rights in the economic and educational fields without considering the country's political stability," he said.

"They are too narrow in their perception and did not want to acknowledge the sacrifices made by Umno and the Malays," Dr Mahathir said.

Hence they often supported the opposition party which was very racial in its attitude and were inclined to read articles which alleged that Chinese rights did not get appropriate attention.

Dr Mahathir said the economic policies such as the New Economic Policy and now the National Development Policy and the Education Policy were fair and were for the common good.

Dr Mahathir said that in Malaysia, mother-tongue education and its use and writing were allowed provided the national language (Bahasa Melayu) was given its rightful place.

"In other countries, allow me to draw your attention, not only mother-tongue education is disallowed but names will also have to be

changed," he said.

The Prime Minister said that this year it would be exactly 45 years of Umno-MCA cooperation during which period both parties had gone through many challenges and crisis.

"But with common sense prevailing among the leaders and members of both parties, in the Alliance then and in the Barisan Nasional now all the crisis and tension had been overcome," Dr Mahathir said.

"The MCA and Umno had become closer and stronger after resolving each crisis and problem that came by," he said.

It could not be denied that the ties and cooperation between Umno and the MCA formed the basis of the BN's strength, he added.

The Prime Minister also touched on the government's efforts to raise the efficiency and skills of manpower, entry of foreign investment into Malaysia and Malaysian industrialists' involvement in projects overseas.

"Our country has changed much. Malaysia is no longer strange to anyone for Malaysians and their country are known everywhere," he added. --

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