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Mahathir-clock-in

PM CONGRATULATES JUDGES FOR REDUCING BACKLOG OF CASES

KUCHING, March 15 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today congratulated the judges for succeeding in reducing the backlog of cases although many more are pending disposal.

"The number of backlogged cases in the courts has dropped drastically, thanks to the hard work of the judges and hence, delayed justice and injustice has been reduced," he said when opening the Judges Conference, here.

He also did not want the directive for judges to clock-in to be made an issue, saying he believed that the system could help in a small way in efforts to bring justice to society.

He said that judges, as members of society, must accept what the rest of society accepted and this included clocking-in.

It could not be denied that there were judges who were not at their workplace at the appointed time and this could slow down the legal process and deny justice, he said.

"In our society, the judges come from among the members of society. There is now no judge who becomes one solely by virtue of his ancestry," Dr Mahathir said.

"But the courts, prosecutors and lawyers often get cases postponed with such ease. This is bound to delay and slow down the judicial process and deny justice.

"If government servants must clock-in, and even wear name tags, the same practice should not be looked down on by society," he said in response to criticisms on the clock-in system for judges which took effect on Feb 1.

"I am aware that there are parties who are uneasy over the clock-in directive. A poison-pen letter has been circulated on the clock-in. Certain bodies have also criticised and opposed the move, ostensibly on the ground that it would lower the dignity of the judges," he said.

The prime minister said that with the increasing commercial and industrial activities in Malaysia which was developing rapidly, the number of new types of crimes would rise.

He stressed the importance of speed in the disposal of commercial crimes which was on the rise.

Dr Mahathir also said that there were certain parties who wanted to make use of the court to win their boardroom battles by obtaining injunctions which could enrich a person at the expense of another. --

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