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Mahathir-BN

REGULATIONS NEEDED TO PREVENT PARTY BEING DRAGGED TO COURT

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today all Barisan Nasional component parties should have regulations to penalise members who bring their party's internal problems to court.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN Chairman, said existing laws had also been amended to prevent anyone from bringing a political party's internal problems to court.

He referred to Section 18(c) of the Societies Act which reads: The decision of a political party or any person authorised by it or by its constitution or rules or regulations made thereunder on the interpretation of the constitution, rules or regulations or on any matter relating to the affairs of the party shall be final and conclusive and such decision shall not be challenged, appealed against, reviewed, quashed or called in question in any court on any ground and no court shall have jurisdiction to entertain or determine any suit, application, question or proceeding on any ground regarding the validity of such decision.

Speaking to reporters after opening the 25th National Delegates Conference of the Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (Gerakan) at its headquarters in Cheras here, Dr Mahathir said the BN need not set up a committee to take action against any member of BN component parties, who brought the party's internal problems to court.

"This is up to the BN component parties. The BN has no power to control the situation or internal problems in individual parties," he added.

The Prime Minister said this when asked to comment on the action of certain members of BN component parties to bring their party's internal problems to court such as in the Gerakan and the Peoples' Progressive Party (PPP).

In the case of the Gerakan, its member for Batu Datuk Joseph Chong went to court to have him reinstated as a member of its central committee, after being sacked from it, to enable him to be a delegate and thereupon a candidate for the party's presidency. However the court ruled that it had no jurisdiction to decide Chong's application.

Umno and the MIC are among BN component parties which have amended their respective constitutions to prevent members from bringing their party's internal problems to court.

Gerakan President Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said recently that his party would also amend its constitution following Chong's action.

Dr Mahathir said the BN component parties could also introduce code of ethics such as Umno "but the code is something personal."

"If we become a corrupt race, sooner or later not only the party but the country will also be destroyed. All that we have built will be lost. Believe it..a corrupt country will never progress," he said when referring to money politics.

Asked whether the role of the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) would be intensified to handle the corruption problem also in political parties, Dr Mahathir said the role of the ACA had already been intensified but sometimes it was difficult to get sufficient proof for the ACA to take the matter to the courts.

That is why (political) parties themselves must be willing to take action against their own people whether there was enough evidence or not.

Dr Mahathir said in cases involving civil servants also, the ACA could

not take them to court because of inadequate proof.

"Hence we often put them in cold storage and we transfer them from a position of authority to one where they have no power or authority and these are internal measures that can be taken," he said.

Dr Mahathir hit out at party members who had been elected delegates but seek bribes from candidates.

Describing candidates involved in money politics as immoral, Dr Mahathir asked delegates not to elect such people as an immoral party would sooner or later be destroyed.

"Unfortunately the delegates also sometimes ask for money. They not only wait for money but also go and ask for money..when we have reached that stages.. it will be difficult to turn back to a clean path."

"Hence we will become a corrupt society and a corrupt society will eventually collapse," he said.

"We have to try and spread ethical values," he added. -- BERNAMA

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