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Convention-reaction

MAHATHIR'S VIEWS ON DEMOCRACY LAUDED

KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech on democracy has been well received by various leaders who agreed that racial unity and the country's progress will be enhanced through the Malaysian concept of democracy.

MIC president Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu said Malaysia had succeeded in moulding its own type of democracy.

He said the government was always upholding democracy and there was no obstruction to democratic practices in the country.

"Malaysia is among the most popular democratic nations in Southeast Asia," he said when commenting on Dr Mahathir's speech at the 50th Umno anniversary Convention, here, today.

Samy Vellu said Malay unity was vital to other races in Malaysia since it contributed towards the nation's progress and stability.

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said it was appropriate for Dr Mahathir to clarify various values related to democracy.

"We don't want to blindly emulate other values since Malaysia is able to build its own values in relation to issues like democracy, human rights and the environment," he said.

Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) president Datuk Yong Teck Lee said Dr Mahathir's views on democracy would be remembered by Malaysians in the years to come.

Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib said the speech touched on various angles and stressed how the Malays should use democracy to bring progress and advantages to the nation.

"The president's speech has indepth meaning and has ignited the thinking of the Malays on the concept of democracy," he said.

Another Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said Dr Mahathir's keynote address would have an important bearing on the future direction of Umno's political administration.

He said the various races in the country should understand and know their respective roles and responsibilities.

"They should not only defend the existing democratic system but should also help develop the nation's socio-economic status and make Malaysia an even more outstanding country," he said.

"The Prime Minister's speech is a boost towards the understanding of Malaysian politics, politics in Umno and how to ensure that the model chosen is not abused," he said.

Permanent chairman of the Wanita Umno Movement Tan Sri Hajah Aishah Ghani said the Umno president's speech reminded party members of the origin of the party's struggles and the party's efforts to provide dignity for the Malays.

Former Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Musa Hitam said the Prime Minister's speech was made after scrutinization of the nation's political problems especially those pertaining to democratic affairs.

"His speech is based on experience and views which should be embraced and followed by all Umno members," he said.

Umno stalwart Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen said all Malaysians should unite and preserve national solidarity. -- BERNAMA

TEAM ZUL AAM