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Mahathir-Consensus

BN'S CONSENSUS SYSTEM TO PROTECT COMPONENTS' INTERESTS

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 6 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the consensus system practised by the Barisan Nasional (BN) is to protect the interests of its components parties.

He said that if the system was reviewed he believed the small parties in the coalition would feel that they had lost their status.

"Even to decide on it (the review on the consensus system), we need a consensus. If there is consensus in agreement, okay. But I believe that the small parties will feel that they have lost their status," he told reporters after presenting the Prime Minister's Awards 1996 and opening the National Symposium on MS ISO 9000, here.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on a suggestion that the consensus system practised by the BN be reviewed to facilitate the entry of more political parties into the BN.

However, Dr Mahathir who is also the BN chairman, said the matter could be discussed.

Asked whether it was appropriate to review the system now, he said "If we review, the MIC will lose because it is a minority party."

Umno Youth chief Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi had said after opening the Indian Progressive Front (IPF) fifth delegates conference yesterday that the IPF's suggestion for a review of the consensus system would be brought to Dr Mahathir's attention to enable the IPF to join the BN. -- BERNAMA

NHD HS JK