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Mahathir - crisis

CURB DESIRES TO CONTROL THOUGHTS DURING CRISIS, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 19 (Bernama) -- Umno members and leaders at all levels must not allow envy, hatred and vengeance to control them in facing the economic crisis, said Prime Minister and party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Instead, they must ensure that their thinking should curtail their desires at the very least, he said in his presidential address at the 52nd Umno general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre here today.

"Let others be dominated by the feeling of vengeance, hatred and envy, etc. Whatever we do, it should be based on our thoughts and judgements consistent with the needs of an advanced civilisation, God willing," he said in addressing the 1,907 delegates at PWTC's Dewan Merdeka.

In his speech entitled "The Challenges of Turmoil", and carried live over radio and television networks, Dr Mahathir spoke at length of factors that had caused the economic problem which hit the country nearly a year ago.

The prime minister said while some felt that the crisis was a problem for the rich and to let them suffer, it was, in fact, a problem for the whole nation.

"What we should note is that when businessmen and big entrepreneurs are faced with problems, we the small timers will also face problems, in fact the whole nation will face problems," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was from the profits of big companies that the government was able to obtain taxes for the nation's expenditure.

"As such, we should not be influenced by the Opposition's jubilation when big companies are faced with problems. Their problem is also our problem.

"It is not wise to incite hatred and envy towards those having problems," said Dr Mahathir.

"We should understand all this. We should understand because whether we are successful or not in our effort to overcome the financial and economic crisis will depend on how much we all understand the problems we are facing," he said.

"Not understanding what exactly attacked us is equivalent to being blind and not knowing exactly the source of the attack. People who do not know what exactly attacked them will create enmities with the other people, the innocent. Thus the attackers will have a big laugh," he said.

He said the government was confident that it could deflect the attacks against Malaysia and with the support of the people, efforts to revive the economy would in the end be successful.

"This Umno-led government had formulated various strategies and approaches which I need not elaborate as this is not the right time and because there are certain quarters out to see this fail," he said.

Leaders of the other 13 Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties and representatives of political parties from eight countries also attended the opening ceremony.

The presidential speech and a resolution on the economy will be debated during the assembly which ends on Sunday.

Dr Mahathir said all Malaysians should work together to defend the country's sovereignty.

"When they were confronted by the Communists they showed a smiling face. They were more concerned with basic human rights, with suppression

among human beings, with violent Communism and injustice in the world," he said.

The West claimed that they would take action to prevent injustice and any form of suppression anywhere.

"They try to portray their actions similar to Hollywood's Rambo, one who is bold, strong and successful, and who never dies," he said.

"But do remember Bosnia-Herzegovina," he said, pointing out that the West did not do anything when the Serbs attacked the Muslims and Croats in Bosnia.

He said some 300,000 Bosnian Muslims were killed before the West dared take any action against the Serbs and Serbia.

"Having witnessed the events in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and Burundi and now Kosovo, can we believe that the West will fight for the basic human rights including the right to work and be paid?" he said.

-- BERNAMA

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