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Mahathir-Nepotism

NEPOTISM ISSUE BROUGHT UP TO TOPPLE GOVERNMENT- MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 26 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today nepotism has been brought up and turned into a political issue in this country to topple the government which did not bow and acquiesce to the West.

He said foreigners wanted the Malaysian Government to fall not because they wanted the people who championed the issue to rise but to ensure that the persons who rise would also be grateful to the West for its support of them.

People who raised the issue of nepotism in Malaysia were considered good by the Western media whereas they themselves were like others or even worse but only this had not been disclosed to the public, he said.

The Prime Minister was opening a leadership seminar for students of institutions of higher learning here.

"When we want to throw mud we have to be careful lest it hit our own face. Do not be hasty in wanting to make profit out of something for oneself to the extent of discrediting our ourselves," he said at the seminar attended by about 300 local university student leaders.

Dr Mahathir asked students in Malaysia not to be easily influenced by the issue of nepotism as it did not occur in Malaysia.

The government gave priority to one's ability, for instance in the award of projects, he said.

"Reforms in Indonesia have nothing to do with us," he said.

He said the reforms in Indonesia were to eliminate nepotism and cronyism but in Malaysia such reforms were to change the thinking, culture and values of the people.

The Prime Minister said he was not denying that there had been nepotism in Indonesia as he himself had a list of companies owned by the family of former Indonesian President Suharto who dominated nearly all businesses in the republic.

Dr Mahathir said he was giving this information not to discredit others but had to do this as there were people who frequently compared Indonesia with Malaysia on the issue of nepotism.

He reminded student leaders and undergraduates in this country to be wise when comparing the good with the bad as they would inherit the country's leadership in the future and if they selected the bad it could ruin the country.

"I fear that you all will be influenced...what will happen to the country if you all cannot separate the good from the bad," he said.

"Before we take the gun and shoot, we must ensure whether the particular person is our target...if we are carried away by arguments that these people are self-interested, that we should rise up and eliminate nepotism, cronyism and bring down the government, we will not benefit as the ones who will benefit are the people with their own agenda," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had lately developed rapidly and the Islamic world looked upon it as a model Islamic nation.

He said if certain people in this country destroyed this model Islamic nation it would cause disunity among Muslims and foreigners would return to recolonise this country.

Dr Mahathir also reminded the students of the danger in certain terms introduced by the West to subdue the thinking of the people to serve its own interests such as "globalisation" and "liberalisation."

He said Malaysians were more of a consumer group and westerners had come up with various tools, such as Information Technology tools which had caused the world to become a global village, with the capacity to mould the thinking of the consumers.

"We have in fact been colonised, our thinking has been subdued, even though we get local information direct from the government we are still exposed to foreign powers which are very efficient in the psychology of propaganda," he said.

The West also introduced currency trading so as to determine the value of currencies in the world and the value could go up or down making countries like Malaysia poor, he said.

When the country became poor to the extent of begging for help, they would impose all kinds of conditions and the country would have to abide by their requirements and be again colonised, he said.

Dr Mahathir said the West tried to link the fall in the value of the ringgit which resulted in the current economic meltdown to alleged failures by the government and sought excuses for the people to rise up and topple the government so that they could come in and assume power.

"They came up with fabrications that our country practised nepotism, crony capitalism, corruption and so on...they harped on these issues and used certain ways to influence us," he said.

He said there were also many people in Malaysia who became influenced out of self-interest and linked the fall of the Indonesian president to practices such as nepotism and cronyism.

"They equalled Malaysia to Indonesia and they asked when will it be here? I know that Indonesian student leaders were specially brought to Malaysia by people interested in getting a place for themselves and they tried to cause incitement in our country," the Prime Minister said.

The system of administration in Indonesia and Malaysia was very different from the aspect of election and in the process of law making, he said.

The three-day seminar which began yesterday is being held at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Jalan Semarak here.

-- BERNAMA

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