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Mahathir-BN

BN ENSURED BUMIPUTERAS BENEFITED FROM ECONOMIC WEALTH, SAYS DR M

LABUAN, Sept 16 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight the Barisan Nasional (BN) ensured that the Bumiputeras benefited from the country's economic wealth while the non-Bumiputeras had a role in politics and government.

The prime minister said by sharing the country's wealth and participating in the country's administration, the government could ensure peace and development.

This had enabled Malaysia to emerge as the world's 17 biggest trading nation, he said.

"Only in 1969, there were racial riots in our country and because of that the westerners said there will be no peace in Malaysia and cannot develop forever," he said when addressing a leader-with-the-people gathering at the Labuan Square here.

About 10,000 people from all walks of life attended the gathering held in conjunction with his one-day visit to this duty-free Federal Territory island and off-shore financial centre.

Dr Mahathir said the lesson learnt from the May 13 incident was the Bumiputeras did not reap the benefits from the country's economic wealth while the non-Bumiputeras wanted a role in politics and the country's administration.

"Hence, the BN came up with a policy to ensure all Malaysians could taste the country's wealth and administer the country together. BN ensured that the Bumiputeras ventured into economic activities while non-bumiputeras in politics," he said.

Dr Mahathir also stressed the importance of the people giving the BN and the prime minister a clear mandate to run the country.

Without a strong mandate from the people, it was impossible for a prime minister, no matter how intelligent or brave he can be, to do anything to develop the country, he said.

"With a strong support from the people, a prime minister will be bold enough to do whatever is good for the country," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the people's support was very crucial and with their strong support, the country had attained remarkable progress including withstanding the attacks by the rogue currency speculators.

"Our economy has recovered given the people's firm support... we are not boasting that we are clever and brave but to prove to the world that we can protect our country," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said Labuan was made a federal territory not because the federal government wanted to have many territories but merely to develop this island for the people's well-being.

Since becoming a federal territory, the federal government had spent more than RM1 billion to develop various infrastructure facilities for the people such hospital and roads.

" We want to turn the whole island into a park and this means, the people here will live in a park... a living environment that cannot be found in other parts of the country," he said.

The people of Labuan would be among the most fortunate in Malaysia when all the development plans for the island were implemented, he added.

-- BERNAMA

MT TS