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Mahathir-Elections

DEFEND THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE, MALAYSIANS TOLD

JITRA, May 1 (Bernama) -- The nation's independence will come to an end if the people allow themselves to be instigated by the opposition who are under foreign influence during the coming elections, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

As such, the prime minister called on the people to defend the country's independence.

"We will defend the country's sovereignty until our last breath," he said when opening the Kubang Pasu Umno divisional conference, here.

Dr Mahathir, who is the head of the division, said that Malaysia was an independent nation and the people therefore had the right to determine their own fate.

"Not (Joseph) Estrada (the president of the Philippines) or leaders of foreign nations, using local puppets, have the right to decide the nation's future," he said.

"We rely on elections for the people to determine the government and not through demonstrations resorted to by the opposition parties," he said.

Dr Mahathir called on the people to be wary of the antics of the opposition parties like PAS and Keadilan which adopted in total the Western style of liberal democracy without discarding the negative elements.

They feel that they could do anything including indulging in libel and slander and blasphemy and vulgarity like in the West, he said.

"Let's not be too obsessed with the West. We should adopt only the positive aspects," he said.

Malaysia, he said, aspires to become a nation which attains progress in all aspects but retaining moral values and not achieving progress and abandoning moral values like in the West.

Dr Mahathir also criticised PAS and Keadilan for instilling ingratitude among the people for the government's assistance and sacrifices.

"They teach students not to be grateful to the people who helped provide them universities and scholarships. They teach them to bite the hands that feed them," he said.

The prime minister said that the two opposition parties however refused to take responsibility when the students they paid to riot were condemned by society and detained by the authorities.

He also said that the people would not be able to accept those who deliberately twisted the meanings of verses of the Quran and the "hadis" (sayings of the Prophet) by telling them to do things which were against the religion like resorting to profanity and defamation.

The people, he said, should not believe the allegation that what had happened in the courts had been framed up so that a certain person could be prevented from becoming the country's leader.

"There should be no difference in the enforcement of the law...whether on leaders or the ordinary people. In Malaysia, a ruler can also be brought to court," he said.

Even Umno with two million members, he said, had been declared unlawful when a branch inadvertently sent a delegate to the general assembly.

There was also a minister who was sentenced to death, a menteri besar and exco members convicted but the government accepted the decision even though they were not in the government's favour.

-- BERNAMA

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