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Abdullah-Falsehood

DISMISS CULTURE OF FALSEHOOD, SAYS ABDULLAH

TUARAN, Sept 15 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today that the people should dismiss the culture of falsehood sanctioned by certain quarters that has influenced especially the younger generation in opposing the government.

He said that it was even unfortunate when the truth was rejected if it bears good news or it is regarding the country's successes and instead lies are readily accepted even though they are bad news and are allegations of the government's failures.

"This culture of falsehood is a cancer which is very dangerous and is now beginning to spread and be ingrained within the society. In the end, not only will leaders be sacrificed, in fact the entire institution we have built will also be destroyed," he said in his keynote address at the national Barisan Nasional (BN) convention, here.

Calling on the people to be grateful over the successes which had been achieved by past and present leaders, he also said that the full meaning of independence should be appreciated.

He said that the notion that tales of independence were outdated and out of place ought to be discarded because citizens not well-versed with the history of their homeland would not have deep-rooted attachment.

Abdullah, who is deputy BN chairman, said that everyone should have a proper perspective in determining the nation's destiny to preserve the sovereignty of the country's independence.

"The nation's independence will only be meaningful if we have our own government, free to determine our destiny, not having to bow to anybody (and) free to determine our economic and political future," he said.

The nation's independence, he said, was almost jeopardised middle of last year following speculative attacks on the nation with the gross domestic product (GDP) having contracted at a rate of 2.8 per cent in the first quarter and 6.8 per cent in the second quarter.

"If not for the wisdom of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who with a mind and spirit of independence, had taken measures based on his own recipe and formula, our independence could have ended by us giving in to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)," he said.

In his keynote address themed "Barisan, The Nation's Vanguard For The New Millennium", Abdullah said that the people in the country had many reasons to be grateful with the latest being that they were still able to celebrate independence in the true sense, more so with the improving economic situation.

"We should also be grateful because the economic crisis has not resulted in anarchy and citizens of the country have been saved from suffering loss of lives, having their business premises burnt, starving and seeing the roads turning into scenes for demonstrations," he said.

The people in the country, he said, had also shown that they were capable of chalking successes and making the country proud while the nation was developing rapidly with various modern infrastructure.

Abdullah also criticised certain groups, especially PAS, which would rather have rifts among the people and leading the Malays especially, into an isolated political movement and instilling the culture of factionalism.

There were also groups which attempted to divert the community towards polemics over petty issues whereas the government was determined in

embarking on efforts to set up giant bodies in the field of commerce, finance, science and technology, education, and communications and information, he said.

As such, he said, what had been built could be destroyed, whether due to attacks from outside or actions from within, while racial unity in the country could also be destroyed within a short period if there were quarters prepared to resort to irresponsible actions.

Even though faced with challenges, the existing leaders would continue to build the nation for the next generation and ensure prosperity for everyone and "if possible, let poverty remains a word only in the dictionary", he said.

Referring to the BN, he said that the coalition of the various parties had been successful in uniting the various races but it was not an institution merely to gain power or a short-term platform for cooperation only in facing an election.

It was in this spirit that the BN had accepted Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) as a component party in 1986 but in the election of that year, PBS had stood against the BN, he said.

"Unfortunately, the PBS' intention to join the BN was only for its narrow political interest, to protect the power of its leadership," he said.

Abdullah also called on BN members to jointly strive to further promote brotherhood and to renew their pledge of loyalty to the party and the leaders.

"God willing, based on our performance and record of services, the BN will once again go through the test with courage and strength.... God willing, a year from now, we will once again meet at a convention with colours of victory and with the greatest of gratitude," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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