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Dr M: Opposition lies confusing the people

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The lies and slander spread by the Opposition have confused the people to the extent that they can no longer tell what is true and what isn't, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Umno president said if the matter was not addressed, he said the public would continue to be deceived and they might make a wrong decision.

Speaking at the launching of a nationwide campaign by Umno to combat lies and slander by the Opposition at the Putra World Trade Centre, the Prime Minister said the bigger challenge for the party was to counter lies on issues relating to its former deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"He has successfully over the years portrayed himself as religious and a person of high morals so that it is difficult to convince the public that he is actually not the person that he has made himself to be."

Alluding to one's belief in the brand name of a popular product, Dr Mahathir said when someone successfully managed to portray himself as being pious, it would be difficult to persuade others to look at him in a different manner.

"For example, the DAP claims I am a dictator. When this label sticks, it will be hard for us to counter it and say that I am not a dictator, that the Government has brought progress to the country."

Similarly, he said the people were not convinced that Umno was a party that championed Islam unlike Pas which had created a label that it was an Islamic party although it had done nothing for the religion.

Dr Mahathir said Anwar was a smooth operator in concocting lies and that many had been taken in by them.

"In 1974, he lied that a child died because of hunger and the Government was cruel for allowing such a thing to happen. As a result, university students demonstrated.

"In 1981, he joined Umno although before that, he was against the party. But when he was sacked last year, he had no qualms about turning against the party, which showed that he had no loyalty to Umno."

Dr Mahathir said Anwar joined Umno because he realised that he would not be able to become the Prime Minister if he was to use Pas as his political platform.

The Prime Minister said Anwar also lied that he was poisoned by the Government, which caused his supporters to take to the streets to vent their anger.

"It clearly showed that he has been lying but many still believed him," he said, adding that Anwar now often complained of headaches which often caused disruptions to his on-going sodomy trial.

"In arsenic poisoning, medical tests can easily prove the truth. So now he is using another approach by complaining of headaches which is difficult for doctors to ascertain."

Dr Mahathir said the string of lies spawned by Anwar showed that he was an expert in the matter.

"Soon, his supporters will get angry as the Government will be seen as being cruel for putting pressure on their sick leader ... then they will take to the streets again," he said, adding that Anwar's tactic was to create issues that could incite the people to go against the Government. "He will continue to lie as his whole life is a lie."

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