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Mahathir-BN

ENSURE BN'S VICTORY FOR CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT - DR MAHATHIR

KEPALA BATAS, July 1 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on the people to ensure Barisan Nasional's (BN) victory in the coming general election so that the development progress and racial harmony enjoyed by them could be maintained.

The Prime Minister said they must ensure that a strong government continued to rule the country.

Only the governing BN could form a strong government, he said.

"Only the BN can defend the sovereignty of our country. No other party can do so," he said when speaking at a leader-with-the-people gathering at Sekolah Menengah Guar Perahu, here.

He said if other parties apart from BN won the polls, they cannot form a strong government capable of facing the challenges ahead.

" If they win, they will bow to foreign powers," said Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman.

Dr Mahathir said supporting other parties would mean backing the foreigners in their efforts to re-colonise the country.

He said although the foreigners deny that they were backing opposition parties or trying to re-colonise this country, it was clear that they were favouring the opposition as could be seen from their media reports.

"Surprisingly, even PAS has gained their support. They supported parties like PAS and Keadilan because when they become the country's leaders, the government in power will be a weak government and they can control easily," he said.

On the contrary, Dr Mahathir said, the BN-led government could protect the country's sovereignty and ensure uninterrupted development.

He said Malaysia would remain as an independent nation and witness much progress in years to come if the people gave their undivided support to the BN.

He said the BN government's efforts to tackle the economic downturn have yielded big success despite attempts by outsiders to weaken the country and force the government to receive their aid only to bow to them.

The Prime Minister said if the government had failed to deal with the economic downturn effectively, there would certainly be anxiety among the people which would eventually lead to chaos as what happened in a neighbouring country.

" If there were serious economic problems, the people will riot, rob and sometimes commit murders," he said.

In Malaysia, the government strove to strike a balance in the economic strength among the various races but if the efforts failed due to the economic downturn, there would be uneasiness among the races who were still poor and they would be jealous against the race which had prospered, he said.

Dr Mahathir said although certain people have orchestrated efforts to compel the government to accept financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to handle the economic problems, the government leadership was not easily influenced but instead it did some hard thinking on ways to revive the economy.

The government initiated several unprecedented measures which resulted in the quick recovery of the economy, he said.

" We did not seek help from foreigners but we did something different from the usual measures to stimulate our economy. The new approaches were

successful proving that we can do it, Malaysia Boleh," he said.

" Many people who once said that we will be finished and destroyed now acknowledge that our approaches have saved the country. Now, they are emulating our ways," he said.

On foreign investments, Dr Mahathir said, Malaysia always welcomed serious foreign investors but not profiteers similar to those who dabbled in shares.

Serious investors could help rejuvenate Malaysia's economy by creating more job opportunities for the people, he said.

They also never meddled in the country's affairs, he said.

On today's gathering, the Prime Minister said, he was happy to see the large crowd of people who have come to listen to him despite the heavy rain prior to his arrival.

" Their presence in the rain has strengthened my spirit and renewed my determination to further develop the country under the BN government administration," he added.

-- BERNAMA

AHH RON TS