

22/11/1999

Government has been fair to all

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KOTA BARU, Sun. - Kelantan Umno liaison chief Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said today the Government has been quite fair to everybody, including the Opposition.

"I was never arrested, threatened or harassed when I was the Opposition (coalition) leader of Parti Melayu Semangat 46, Pas and the DAP, and I would have been Prime Minister if the Opposition had won," he said.

Speaking at a BBC interview at his Palm Manor home, Tengku Razaleigh said when he was in the Opposition he never allowed party members and supporters to take to the streets.

"We can fight within the law. Sometimes we felt the Government was harsh to us and I never got the support and coverage but you must accept this when you are in Opposition," he said.

As Opposition leader he never spoke without a permit.

"I could have broken the law and gone ahead and spoken. When the police arrest me, there would be scuffles. But the police would only be doing their job. You know if you break the law, you must accept the punishment. These troublemakers merely want to show they are heroes."

He disagreed with the BBC description of former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Anwar Ibrahim as "the next Nelson Mandela".

"When he was in power, Anwar sacked and bankrupted those who did not support him," he said.

Tengku Razaleigh said he brought Anwar into Umno and supported him when he contested for the post of Umno Youth leader.

He described Anwar's dismissal as Deputy Prime Minister as "a falling out" and that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was only "exercising his prerogative".

He said while sodomy was allowed in England and the West, it was against the law in this country.

"He (Anwar) has so many lawyers to defend him. What more do you want? We follow the British system of justice, not Islamic law. The ISA (Internal Security Act) was introduced (in this country) by the British. Do you want the IRA to bomb England?"

"You can see that our elections are fair and free. Why should the people take to the streets if they believe in elections? You are (just) inviting violence. We have to look after the majority (of the people) and not just a few who are dissatisfied."

On the general election, Tengku Razaleigh predicted that Barisan Nasional would win, adding that he anticipated a good response for the BN manifesto from the people.

When told that people generally see him as the next Prime Minister after Dr Mahathir, he said: "Everybody sees what they want to see." I am a nobody. I am not in Government and not even a Minister.

Asked whether he was ruling himself out, he replied: "No, I don't rule myself out. I am just one of the gurdhas. I am just a helper. Que sera sera (Whatever will be, will be)."

For the next phase of the campaign, he said he would be meeting the people and go from house to house in order to get feedback for himself.

Despite the steady downpour this morning, he visited several homes at Pangkal Pisang in Peringat, the constituency of the deputy State Umno chief, Datuk Anuar Musa, who received him on arrival.

Tengku Razaleigh told supporters that he expected Umno to perform well

as there was solidarity in the leadership.  
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