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Mahathir-Civil Servants

MAJORITY OF CIVIL SERVANTS DON'T SUPPORT OPPOSITION, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight the majority of civil servants do not support the opposition parties and he is confident that they will continue to support Barisan Nasional (BN).

He did not dispute that there are officers in the government and administration who sympathise with former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim but said that their number had decreased.

Many of them believed that Anwar had been victimised in the beginning but now it was clear that there was no victimisation, he said in a special interview with TV3.

The transcript of the interview was released to Bernama by the Prime Minister's Office.

Dr Mahathir was asked to what extent the civil servants opposed the government following the dismissal of Anwar from the cabinet and Umno.

He said there were civil servants who, during their student days, were members of the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (Abim) or the Islamic Revolutionary Council (IRC) who were trained in the universities to oppose the government.

He said the effect of their opposition was small but the government wanted its employees not to actively support the opposition as this would affect their daily duties.

Dr Mahathir said: "While government officers can have a political stand, we want them to discharge their duties as required by the government. Who they vote is their prerogative.

"But if they spend their time in the office campaigning, like some teachers who purposely raise feelings of hatred against the government, it will destroy the administration."

He said the opposition was prepared to disturb the schoolchildren and even instigate kindergarten students to hate certain people and the government including giving them the photos of national leaders to trample on.

Dr Mahathir said schoolchildren and undergraduates also fell victims to the instigations of the opposition parties who diverted them from their studies.

The prime minister said that unlike the opposition parties, BN did not disturb the students and BN should in fact correct the students starting from kindergarten so that they did not grow up hating certain people or parties.

"It's the same with Islam which teaches (us) from small that the pig is dirty so that when we grow up, we hold strongly to that, we cannot touch, we cannot look.

"If taught from small, they will grow up with this ideology (hating the leaders and the government). This is the long-term plan of the opposition parties and we must counter it right from the kindergarten, school and university stage," he said.

On the hero-worship of certain leaders in the opposition, Dr Mahathir said there were some people who were obsessed with the leaders and whose minds could not be changed.

For example, he said, these supporters accepted it when the leader said that God cursed.

"We show that it is stated in the Quran that God forbids us to slander

because slander is more dangerous than killing. Unfortunately, these loyal supporters will say " but this does not come from our teacher, although it's in the Quran we don't believe, so much so that if our teacher says that God curses, it must be true.

"This is hardcore. But among them there are those who are rational and they we can correct," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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