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BN-democracy

MALAYSIAN DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES MOST EFFECTIVE, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 22 (Bernama) -- The Barisan Nasional (BN) government has created a system of democracy which is most effective among developing nations, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We provide political freedom to all, even to the opposition parties but of course they claim it is not so," he said after launching the Barisan Nasional (BN) manifesto entitled "Malaysia, Free, United, Successful with Barisan Nasional" at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC), here last night.

He said that since it achieved Independence 42 years ago, Malaysia had never missed holding its general elections and voters were assured of the freedom to make their choice.

Dr Mahathir said there was also no oppression of the opposition parties as in some developing countries where opposition members were sued until they became bankrupt and charged with various offences.

In Malaysia, no BN political opponent was detained under the ISA (Internal Security Act) as those detained were only drug traffickers and currency counterfeiters, he said.

He said the BN did not arrest someone just because of different political ideology.

He said the BN government would use its own discretion to design its own system, incorporating the the best available in other systems of government.

Dr Mahathir also said the government provided freedom to opposition party newspapers like Harakah so that the people would eventually find out who had been lying.

The BN also allowed vernacular schools unlike in other countries where education was only in the national language, he said.

"We also accept all communities in our security forces and the public service but there are countries, even those near to us which do not allow certain community to carry arms because they don't trust that community," he said.

In Malaysia, he said everyone is free to take up arms for the country.

To a question, he said the move by head of the PAS council of ulama Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat to accept DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang to become prime minister showed that he was accepting Kit Siang as an ulama.

He said this was because Nik Aziz had said that only ulama could become lead the country.

"So when he says Kit Siang can become prime minister, it means he acknowledges Kit Siang as an ulama," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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