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Mahathir-Opposition

OPPOSITION PACT MEMBERS TRYING TO OUTWIT ONE ANOTHER, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 28 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the four opposition parties in the so-called alternative front are only out to deceive one another.

This is going by their antic of issuing a joint manifesto and at the same time, separate manifestos for each party and state, he said.

"First they come up with a joint manifesto and then each party and state issues its own manifesto.

"What's the meaning of cooperation if each party draws up its own manifesto," the prime minister said in an interview with Radio and Television Malaysia recorded at his office at Putrajaya.

The interview was later aired over radio and television today.

The prime minister said the people should reject the opposition alliance because even at the outset the parties involved did not seem to be sincere and trustworthy about honouring the pledge in the joint manifesto.

Dr Mahathir said with the opposition parties preoccupied with trying to trick one another there was no way that the alternative front could match the governing Barisan Nasional (BN) in forging unity and cooperation.

He said: "PAS' constitution calls for the creation of an Islamic state but the DAP says +over my dead body. And now PAS maintains it is willing to set aside the Islamic state in the alternative front's joint manifesto.

"But PAS deputy president Abdul Hadi Awang insisted on forming an Islamic state. There seems to be no pact."

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president and BN chairman, said that BN had proven its capabilities and made good its pledges.

"The BN approach is not to promise something it cannot deliver. We know that there's a strong likelihood that we'll again be returned to power in the coming general election and once given the mandate we have to honour our promises for the good of the people," Dr Mahathir said.

Dr Mahathir urged the people to be discerning and wise in choosing the next government in the coming polls.

"We must know that when we choose a candidate, we choose not because of emotions or narrow-mindedness but based on an evaluation of the candidate as to what party he represents and what are the programmes of his political party," Dr Mahathir said.

However, he said, there was an attempt to close the voters' minds so that they would choose purely because of party sentiment and at the same time creating hatred towards certain leaders and party.

"It is wrong for one to choose because of his hatred against another party or certain leader. It leaves you no choice if you choose because of your hatred of which you merely heard and not because what you evaluate," the prime minister said.

According to Dr Mahathir, some people voiced resentment against the government merely because of a small matter and he related an incident about a man waiting to use a hospital lift.

"The lift was late and because of this the man voiced his reason for not wanting to vote for the government," he said.

The man and those with a similar mentality chose to ignore the fact that he got free medical and facilities provided for him and the others.

"This type of thinking is prevalent due to some frustrations.

"But you must see the wider picture like what has the government done for the whole country ... directly or indirectly you must have benefited,"

the prime minister said.

"There is nobody that has not benefited from something the government has done .. even a school in rural area, free text book or maybe a road to enable you to come out from the village," Dr Mahathir added.

-- BERNAMA

ARA RYN