

20 JUL 1999
Mahathir-Women
PAS LEADERS UNCARING, EGOISTIC

ALOR SETAR, July 20 (Bernama) -- The PAS state government policy in Kelantan of discouraging the recruitment of beautiful women reflects the uncaring and egoistic attitude and thinking of the party's leaders, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said the statement by Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat that the state government discouraged the employment of beautiful women was discriminatory.

"It is not their fault, good looks are God given, why should we victimise them?" he said when asked to comment on the Nik Aziz statement at the end of his two-day visit to Kedah today.

"If you do not want to look (at beautiful women), lower your gaze, some of the pious do not look at others, just do your work without looking at a face if looking makes you uncomfortable...", he told a press conference at the Sultan Abdul Halim airport here.

Dr Mahathir said it showed that PAS leaders were not caring and all they can think about was themselves, their own satisfaction, comfort and interests.

"They don't think about the people's interests nor women's interests and they don't think about women finding themselves pretty," he said.

"They are very selfish people and selfish people cannot think, we have to have people who are fair to everyone," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Nik Aziz, in claiming to be fair to the less pretty, was being unfair to the pretty and in his claim to be fair to the poor whom he said would all go to heaven, he was being unfair to the rich whom he (Nik Aziz) said would all go to hell.

"How does he know?" Dr Mahathir asked.

He said this was the kind of mentality that PAS leaders have which convinced him (Dr Mahathir) that they were not suitable to become leaders.

Asked of the results of his visit here, Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said the party in the state was ready to face the general election.

"Umno is ready to face any challenge and we will give a full explanation to the people to destroy the PAS accusations," he said.

On the PAS claim that it was confident of winning in several states, Dr Mahathir said it was an "old story" which has been the party's tactic in every general election since 1955.

"In every general election, they claim to be able to win in several states, rule the country even. But, their statements after the general elections were not as claimed.

"And, this time to console themselves and maybe to influence voters into believing PAS could win so that they would vote PAS," he said.

"This is the same old story in every general election. Look back at newspapers in 1955, 1959, 1964, 1969, 1975 and so on, it is the same story -- PAS would win and capture several states or PAS would win and rule the country," he said.

On the PAS claim that Umno was now disunited, Dr Mahathir said: "We will see in the general election, we do not like to boast...we cannot pronounce Umno will win, we say God-willing, Umno will win".

Asked to what extent has the Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim issue affected Umno's strength in the state he said: "Anwar is a non issue here, not totally in Kedah.

"But I (still) need to explain a little, that is my usual job," he said.

Asked about the pleading tone of his speeches during his visit here, Dr Mahathir said the government did not wish to force, instigate or influence the people but that it was just making a sincere request to the people not to be influenced by opposition instigations.

"Sometimes people get carried away by emotions and refuse to accept facts. We are appealing to these people," he said.

On PAS deputy president Abdul Hadi Awang's statement that the DAP would be allocated 30 Parliamentary seats whereas the DAP had previously said it wanted 48, Dr Mahathir said the matter was of their concern.

"But, I believe they will fight among themselves," he said.

He said Parti Keadilan Nasional appeared to have been disappointed in Pahang as PAS wanted all the seats except those which it could not possibly win which would be given to Keadilan.

--BERNAMA
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