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Gerakan-Lim

REJECT PACT BY EXTREMISTS, SAYS GERAKAN CHIEF

KUALA LUMPUR, July 24 (Bernama) -- The people have been urged to reject the coalition of opposition parties for the next general election because it amounts to an "opportunistic pact of extreme powers" that could be detrimental to the country.

In making the call today, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said the pact would create political instability, have a negative impact on the country's investment climate and erode whatever economic achievements that have been made from the hard and orderly work of the past two decades.

"They have differing extreme ideologies, for example PAS wants to set up an Islamic state while DAP is fighting for a secular Malaysian Malaysia," he said at the opening of the 28th Gerakan national delegates conference here. The conference was opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Lim said the opposition pact would be beset with all sorts of problems because they could not forge genuine cooperation among themselves without sacrificing and compromising their principles.

"If one of these parties is prepared to sell its political soul, can we trust any one of the parties?" he said.

He said it was true that Gerakan and MCA had cooperated with PAS when it was in the Barisan Nasional (BN) between 1974 and 1976, but the situation then was very different because PAS was at that time led by moderate leaders and not ulama extremists like now.

Dr Lim said while PAS tried to sideline women, Gerakan was championing their fate to ensure they would not be left out of the country's development.

"Only the insane would ignore women who now make up about 50 percent of the country's population," he said.

Dr Lim also touched on the success of the country's selective capital controls policy which was the brainchild of Dr Mahathir, and expressed the party's hope that it would be continued.

"I also wish to pledge the full support of Gerakan for Dr Mahathir, for his firm political leadership and strong economic management," he said.

Dr Lim also spoke of the importance of getting youths to be involved in all government programmes to improve the rapport between both sides and to ensure they would not adopt an anti-government attitude.

Dr Lim expressed confidence that Gerakan would remain relevant for the future because it practised the true principles of democracy, and not rhetorical democracy like that of the DAP.

Gerakan also stressed the use of modern technology and methods that could enhance party efficiency, he said.

-- BERNAMA

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