

21 SEP 1999

Mahathir-Officers

SERVE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DAY, SAYS MAHATHIR

KANGAR, Sept 21 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said civil servants are required to serve the elected government of the day professionally and loyally.

Their loyalty should not be to certain individuals only, he said addressing a luncheon with government officers and state political leaders at the residence of the Perlis Menteri Besar here today.

Adhering to this principle would ensure smooth implementation of government policies and efficient running of the administration, he said.

The prime minister was in Perlis for a two-day working visit.

"Civil servants should not align themselves to any political parties except to the government of the day. Policies are to be carried out professionally even if there is a change of government," he said.

Should the electorate choose to vote in a new government, civil servants would have to give their loyalty to the elected government and not the one replaced, he said.

"Civil servants do not have to be loyal to certain leaders in the government but they have to be loyal to the government elected by the people," he said, stressing that loyalty to such individuals should also cease once they no longer lead.

Dr Mahathir said a chaotic government administration would result if civil servants showed loyalty to particular individuals.

"Getting involved in the pursuits of individual cause runs contrary to the principle of professionalism in discharging their duties.

"Let politicians handle the political decision-making while civil servants are only required to implement policies and plans of the elected government," he said.

The prime minister said: "Public servants should not volunteer to state their political stand while on duty...let alone use their position to sabotage government efforts."

By observing such rule, any elected government could be assured of good and professional service from civil servants, he said.

The people would suffer dearly if civil servants themselves derailed policies and plans of the elected government, he said.

Public servants could only make a choice during a general election by freely choosing the government they desired, he said.

"Civil servants would have to serve the government of the day loyally without questioning the government's wisdom or who should lead," he said.

Dr Mahathir cautioned civil servants against having own agendas other than taking care of government affairs as professional workers.

The establishment and civil servants would hold each other in suspicion if civil servants themselves discredit the government at their work place, he said.

Mutual suspicion could only impede the smooth running of the national administration, he said.

The prime minister said he was thankful that most civil servants were upholding the principle of professionalism and commended them for this.

-- BERNAMA

JM RYN