

25/02/2000

Dr M reminds civil servants to be non-partisan, stay clear of corruption

Sarban Singh

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Civil servants were told today to remain non-partisan when carrying out their duties, stay clear of corruption and enhance their professionalism.

They should also keep abreast of technological advancements.

In paying tribute to them, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said civil servants had served commendably since independence and the country's rapid advancement was testimony to this.

The Prime Minister said the government employees had all along served professionally and expressed confidence that they would upkeep this tradition.

He said despite this, they must strive to work harder as not all nations were happy with Malaysia's success story.

"We are aware that not many countries are happy with our success. They will be happier if we were less successful and frequently ask for assistance," he said when addressing top civil servants at the Public Administration Institute here. Dr Mahathir also had a 90-minute dialogue with them.

He said Malaysia's success did not come easy. But it came about, among others, due to the efficient and professional civil service, the proper use of financial resources, good management and the continuous improvement in the government's implementation agencies.

All these too would not have contributed to the country's development if there was no political stability or if the laws were repeatedly violated.

Dr Mahathir said professionalism should be the key determinant of an efficient administration.

"Professionalism means being non-partisan, not favouring any one side. The objective is to discharge our job functions effectively and as required by the Government of the day."

Dr Mahathir said in this era of globalisation, the people were faced with more threats from major powers who saw this as an opportunity for their big corporations to "conquer the world".

"With technological advancement and globalisation, they (foreign powers) hope to again conquer the world. Now, there is no need for an armed warfare (to control the economies of other countries)."

With solid support from their Governments and other international institutions, foreign companies and banks can enter any country and take over their businesses and industries.

These companies, Dr Mahathir said, would eventually have a strong influence in the administration and the politics of the country they had economically conquered.

"I am not telling all these to instil fear in you so that you will support the Government. What I am saying has already happened.

"By depreciating the value of a currency, a rich nation can become weak, there will be no peace, chaos will be the order of the day and eventually, the Government will collapse."

Dr Mahathir said if the new Government did not adhere to the directives of the foreign power, then it too would be overthrown.

"In other words, we will be colonised. That is why we have to be alert at all times. We should not burn the mosquito net if we are angry with the mosquito."

Dr Mahathir also spoke on Malaysia Incorporated which led to co-

operation between the public and private sectors.

He said there was a need for such a partnership because the higher the income of the private sector, the more the Government would get in terms of revenue from taxes.

"We (the Government) will not lose if the private sector got high profits ... however we will lose if the private sector loses."

Dr Mahathir said the public-private sector relationship might also expose civil servants to bribery, adding that if this happened, it would tarnish the image of the service.

"We may think that our corrupt practice can escape detection. But don't be too sure as many have been severely punished."

Dr Mahathir reminded civil servants that bribe-takers faced penalties very much higher than the kickbacks they received.

Dr Mahathir also said it was crucial for civil servants to master the use of computers and the Internet.

(END)