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Political leaders welcome PM's statement

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KUANTAN, Sun. - Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement on the possibility of a non-Malay becoming the Prime Minister in the future was to spark off a new thinking among the Malays and non-Malays.

"It is a far-sighted view to remind everyone that such a situation can become a reality if Malaysians from the various ethnic backgrounds continue promoting peace and harmony and trust each other more," he said.

Adnan said he believed that Dr Mahathir had brought up the idea to test the actual level of unity prevailing in the country.

"If the Malays feel that one of them should continue to be the Prime Minister, the community has to be strong and must get the support of the non-Malays.

"Similarly, the non-Malays must show they are concerned with the welfare of the Malays in order for one of them to take over the post," he said after opening the 11th annual meeting of the State Government Workers Co-operative.

Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib said the statement by the Prime Minister should serve as a warning to all Malays on the consequences of their complacency.

"I feel that this reminder should be taken into account by the Malays. Don't wait until it is too late before we ask ourselves why and blame other people," said Muhammad after attending a Maulidur Rasul celebration organised by the Jalan Raja Bot chapter of the Malay Petty Traders Association.

He said the statement should be interpreted as a reminder on the readiness of the Malays to continue leading the country.

"The Prime Minister's reminder is to ensure that the Malay leadership at all levels are aware and try to find ways to maintain their strength, to always be relevant and discharge their duties well," he said.

He urged the Malays to learn from the developed races of the world.

"They do not sit under the protection of their `mothers' - they go forth and engage in all sorts of endeavours to achieve dominance ... that is the race which we want to emulate," said Muhammad.

Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia vice-president Dr S. Vijayarajnam said Dr Mahathir's view that any Malaysians may one day become Prime Minister is welcomed and highly appreciated.

He said it demonstrates his moderate nature and broad minded attitude, which must be admired and adopted by all Malaysians.

"We hope he will continue to guide our country in this direction. It is also very much in tune with the non-racial ideology adopted by Gerakan."

However, he said, it must be accepted that this political philosophy may take time to be received by everyone.

"It must be allowed to evolve and be assimilated by all races without compulsion," he added.

United Pasok Momogun Kadazandusun Organisation (Upko) president Tan Sri Bernard Dompok said he agreed with Dr Mahathir's statement that there will come a day when the Prime Minister need not necessarily be a Malay.

"I think what the Prime Minister said is a logical sequence and conclusion of a Malaysian race in future.

"A time will come when a non-Malay will become Prime Minister, as long as the person has the support of the majority," he said.

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