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Mahathir-Women

WOMEN HAVE SHOWN THEY ARE GOOD ADMINISTRATORS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the appointment of women to high positions in the government and society is not a question of gender but rather of performance and qualification.

"You have to appoint the person for his or her qualification, not because she is a woman or he is a man," the prime minister said in an exclusive interview with Bernama at his office in Putraya last Tuesday.

"I have no choice. These are the best candidates. And they have reached the top and they qualify and I don't see why I should deny them when no men are as qualified as they are," he said when asked to comment on the appointments of several women to key posts, such as Datuk Ainum Mohamed Saaid as the new Attorney-General and Datuk Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz as Bank Negara Governor.

Ainum and Dr Zeti were the first women in the country to be appointed to the two top posts.

Other women holding high office in the government include Solicitor-General Datuk Heliliah Mohamed Yusof, National Archives Director-General Datuk Habibah Zon and National Library Director-General Shahar Banun Jaafar.

Last Dec 18, Dr Mahathir, when asked to comment on the appointment of Ainum, was quoted as saying: "Nowadays, the government is being taken over by women. The men are too lazy to learn, they are too busy demonstrating, so we don't have enough candidates."

When asked to comment on why men were lazy to learn in the interview, the prime minister said it went back to the university where 60 per cent of the students, especially Malays, were women.

He said the female students took up important studies such as engineering, science and management whereas their male counterparts opted for simple studies which they thought they could pass, like Bahasa Malaysia, Islamic studies and social sciences.

Dr Mahathir said it would be difficult to place these male students in the public sector once they graduated because they lacked the capacity to deal with administrative matters.

He said more female students, on the other hand, were graduating as lawyers, doctors, engineers and scientists.

"They have shown that they can deliver," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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