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Mahathir-BN

BN TO ADOPT NEW APPROACH TO DEAL WITH SENTIMENTS OF PRESENT GENERATION

KUALA LUMPUR, July 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Barisan Nasional (BN) will adopt a new approach based on closer cooperation between its component parties in dealing with the sentiment of the present generation to ensure continuous support of the people and to remain in power.

The prime minister said that the BN's supreme council would draft guidelines so that leaders of all the 13 BN component parties could understand their roles in the prevailing political situation where support of the younger generation for the BN was eroding.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said that from now on BN meetings at all levels should be held more frequently instead of once or twice a year while the component parties should have better interaction between them and try to resolve problems jointly.

BN Members of Parliament and state assemblymen should also give more attention to the other races in their respective constituencies and not only to their own parties or races.

"I wish to call on BN leaders, from now on, to forge closer rapport and to ensure that the BN functions more like a party instead of a coalition of parties," he said in his keynote address at the one-day Fourth BN Convention at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Dr Mahathir said such would be the approach to be adopted to overcome the problems affecting the community which was changing and people who no longer felt indebted to those who had struggled for independence.

The prime minister said these people also do not feel indebted to the government which had developed the country so that they could have a better life than the other races who had attained independence during the same time Malaysia achieved its independence.

At present, Dr Mahathir said, there were many people who were unhappy with their elected representatives as they only focus on their own races and ignore the grouses of the other races and sometimes never even bothered to attend meetings which had been organised.

"This situation is unhealthy for us under the prevailing circumstances. Closer rapport should be enhanced at all times," he said.

The BN chairman said that emphasis should be placed on nurturing a Malaysian race as the BN was a party practising a concept of one Malaysian race.

Dr Mahathir said that the new approach which takes into account the current reality would make the BN stronger to deal with the sentiment of the present generation who were living in comfort without giving a thought to the struggles and sacrifices of the BN and leaders of the country.

He said that the present community especially the younger generation have less sentiment of love or patriotism to the extent that some of them were prepared to be made tools of by foreigners in times of trouble.

"When they opened their eyes they see skyscrapers around them. They now see a different world than during the time of independence and they think all these happened by itself and without any effort.

"They fail to recognise the successes of the BN...some of them think any government can attain such successes," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that in the environment which was more hostile now, the BN should prove its capability to continuously ensure the progress of the people and the country and not depend on support based on its past

achievements.

The prime minister said that the nation's development had not reached the targeted level and the BN should continue to garner support of the people and to remain in power to ensure Vision 2020 was attained for the nation to be accorded the same status as the other developed nations.

"We can no longer depend on the sentiment of gratitude alone," he said.

-- BERNAMA

RV ZAI SHS MAM RM