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Mahathir-Evolution

BN TO BECOME ONE PARTY THROUGH EVOLUTION, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Barisan Nasional's (BN) aspiration to become a party in its own right and not a coalition of parties must be realised through evolution and not revolution.

The prime minister said it was not something that could be done by force without taking into consideration the feelings of the parties about each other.

"We have to work slowly towards it. It is the process of evolution. It depends on the members on how they feel about each other. We cannot force the pace.

"We believe in gradualisation, not in revolution and forcing people to accept what they are not yet prepared to accept," he said at a news conference at the end of the one-day BN Convention here.

He was asked to comment on his statement on the BN's aspiration to become a party in its own right and no longer a coalition of parties like it is now which was made in his keynote address at the opening of the convention this morning.

The BN chairman said the convention showed that the spirit of unity among the BN component parties was still strong with all the component parties stressing the importance to close ranks and to work even closer together.

"I found that the convention proceeded well and the national spirit was evident, it is clear that the BN spirit is still strong in the hearts to every leader and member of the BN," he said.

He said the BN would meet more often to spur its machinery to be more aggressive at the branch and divisional levels.

"At the same time we must have a more active secretariat and centre to collate information on the BN," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that if the spirit of unity among the BN components was maintained it would continue to thrive and control the government in future.

On the formation of a Malaysian race, he hoped that it would be realised because there was now stronger commitment among the BN component parties.

"This is not a matter of negotiation but of inculcating a love for one's own nation and of regarding Malaysians as one race. Ancestry is no problem," he said.

Dr Mahathir was also asked whether there was a need to set up a consultative committee as proposed by several component party leaders to resolve problems relating to race.

He said: "We regard the BN as a machinery that can resolve problems among the races but if there is a need to set up a separate body, we will consider it."

-- BERNAMA

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