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Dr M: BN's tasks more challenging

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Barisan Nasional component parties must not be complacent in strengthening the party and the Government, BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Reminding the coalition that the BN's tasks were still unfinished, Dr Mahathir, who is the Prime Minister, said serving the people must be the BN's top priority.

"Our future tasks are more challenging. Internal and external trials will continue to test us.

"We must work hard to continue in power after the 11th general election in the year 2004," said Dr Mahathir in his message for the upcoming BN convention.

The convention will be held on Saturday.

Dr Mahathir's 14-paragraph message, entitled "A Reflection" (Satu Renungan), will be published in the souvenir programme book for the convention.

The Prime Minister's message was released today by BN chairman Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat.

In his message, the BN chairman pointed out that the BN had served as the pillar of national stability since the country's independence.

"The people still support and depend on us because, for them, the best choice is only the BN party and Government. Therefore we must not let them down," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the BN must begin to reflect on what it has done in order to determine what it needs to do to fulfil its objectives.

As such, he said, the BN convention is an important channel and forum for component parties and members to draw up strategies to ensure the continued success of the party and Government.

Dr Mahathir said the BN's greatest success in its 44-year rule of the country was in creating a more united Malaysian race (Bangsa Malaysia).

He added that the people now possessed a stronger spirit of love and loyalty for the country.

"They are not only proud of being Malaysians but want to contribute towards the success and the glory of Malaysia and its people," said Dr Mahathir.

"That is the new strength within us which will drive us on to achieve our ambition of making Malaysia a developed country, as set out in the Vision 2020 masterplan," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the BN was thankful that since the coalition came into being in 1976, it had managed to achieve a level of political stability that was a source of pride.

"The credit goes to the spirit of power sharing which we have always practised to achieve our objective of balancing the rights of the races, without discriminating against any race or skin colour," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that negotiation was the main instrument for the Alliance and later the BN in seeking political solutions to problems of race, religion and culture.

The Prime Minister urged BN component parties and members to reject the culture of violence which was being spread by the West, especially in developing countries.

"Street demonstrations are not a Malaysian culture. It is a misuse of democracy aimed at achieving the desires of a particular group.

"If there are problems it is better for us to negotiate, and if we are still dissatisfied we can use the vote as the final solution," said Dr Mahathir.

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