

21 JUN 2001

Mahathir-PAS

DR M CHALLENGES PAS TO PUT IN WRITING THE GOVT IT DESIRES

KUALA LUMPUR, June 21 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today challenged PAS to put in black and white the type of government it wishes to form to prove that the opposition party has no intention of cheating the Chinese the way it has cheated the Malays.

He said PAS should state clearly and in-depth the type of non-Infidel and non-secular government which it wanted to set up in Malaysia.

"If PAS does not intend to cheat the Chinese as they do to the Malays, put in writing for its close friends, the DAP and Suqiu, the type of government PAS plans to set up," he said in his presidential address at the 55th Umno General Assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC), here.

He said PAS leaders claimed that the party did not want to cheat the Chinese but was prepared to cheat the Malays by saying, among others, that a vote for Pas is a ticket to heaven and that praying with Umno imams is not legitimate and slaughtering of livestock by Umno is forbidden.

"Now tell me what sort of government that does not follow the Umno-led government which is said to be infidels, that PAS wishes to set up?," asked Dr Mahathir.

He asked: "Is that government democratic if everything must be referred to the council of `ulama' who actually are not elected by the people?"

"Does PAS plan to implement `Hudud' laws on non-Muslims? Will PAS abolish the civil courts and have only the `Syariah' courts for all crimes, including sodomy and rape?"

Dr Mahathir said PAS has promised a pig farm for the Chinese in Terengganu and Malay Reserve land in Kelantan for Chinese schools.

"Please provide information on these two promises. Why is it that while Malays from other states are not allowed to acquire land in Kelantan, yet the Chinese are given such land?," he said.

He also elaborated on how PAS tricked the Malays and non-Malays when it expressed willingness to gamble away the Malay rights merely to fish votes and that PAS was prepared to drop whatever was regarded as Malay rights when facing the non-Malays.

According to Dr Mahathir, PAS cheated the Malays by convincing them that the political stand of their party leaders was merely an excuse to get the support of non-Malays.

"It appears that their leaders are such pious Muslims that it is not possible for them to allow Malay rights to be foregone.

"When everything is successful these leaders and their party will continue with their Islamic Agenda and cheat the non-Muslims. As a result their supporters will continue to support them fanatically," he said.

Dr Mahathir said: "Please consider this. Today, 72 of the Malay representatives are from the government and 32 from the opposition. If only the other 21 seats are won by opposition parties, they will get 53 and Umno 51.

"To get 21 seats is no longer that difficult. In areas where Umno won only a small majority, 200-300 votes from other races will mean a win for the opposition. As such, to ignore Malay rights merely to get non-Malay support is certainly wise.

"But, in order to rule, it is necessary to have at least 97 seats. As such buying and selling, bargaining must be continued. What is there to sell if not the Malay rights?," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government to be created with specific parties would continue to be weak as it is possible for anybody to topple it by withdrawing.

"Can a weak government such as this rule firmly? Can a weak government such as this protect the Malays who are still weak? Together we should ponder this," he said.

He also asked PAS to state clearly the criteria Malaysia should use before it can be regarded as an Islamic nation.

"Does it mean that only after `Hudud' laws are implemented that this group (PAS) will accept this government as not an infidel government, non-secular.

"If Pas wishes to have an Islamic government, will it reject parties like the DAP, non-Malays and non-Islamic Keadilan members who are now their friends," asked the prime minister.

Dr Mahathir questioned if Malaysia was not an Islamic nation, how many countries with 40 per cent of their population who are believers of other religions, and yet could make Islam as their official religion.

He said the world has acknowledged Malaysia as a Muslim nation and many other Islamic governments regarded Malaysia the best model nation for them.

Islamic nations and Islamic institutions gave all kinds of recognition to Malaysia because they are awed by its development and the development of Islam in Malaysia, he said.

The Umno president said more than 100 Islamic and non-Islamic nations sent their students to study at the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

"But in Malaysia there are Muslims who allege that Malaysia is a non-Islamic nation and its government infidel and secular.

"We wish to know which Islamic country in the world that PAS will accept as an Islamic nation," he said.

He asked PAS to show which country in this age really implemented the "Hudud" (Islamic penal code) if its implementation was the criteria used by PAS to accept an Islamic nation.

"As far as we can verify, no country has implemented the `Hudud' law from court proceedings till the implementation of the `Hudud'.

"This does not mean they have rejected the religious tenets but it is because the society today differs from that of the Prophet's time," Dr Mahathir added.

-- BERNAMA

JM RYN