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Mahathir-Government

FAIR REPRESENTATION OF RACES IN GOVT TO BE ENSURED, SAYS PM

JOHOR BAHRU, May 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the government will try to ensure that all races in the country are represented in the government as well as the private sector.

"We are a little bit worried because in the government service there are not many non-Malays...not enough Chinese, not enough Indians. Normally, we will have one Indian as secretary-general (in a ministry) but now it is difficult to get the person...not many are joining and if they join also they do not stay the whole course (up to retirement)," he said.

He said only in the country's diplomatic corps could a fair representation be found while Malaysia's armed forces and the police were not equally represented by all races.

"But this should not only be in the government...in the private sector also we should see companies and corporations being represented by all races so that way, we are balanced," he told reporters after opening the MIC's 55th annual general assembly here.

The assembly is attended by some 1,500 delegates and 500 observers from throughout the country.

The prime minister said the mentality of Malaysians now was for Malays to join the government service and the non-Malays to join the private sector.

Dr Mahathir also said it was equally worrisome to see the Malays relying too much on the Bumiputera quota especially in government universities.

"They are not qualifying themselves sufficiently to qualify into private universities. Of course, the private university fees are higher and the government is quite willing to subsidise them if they want to go into private universities but they must have the necessary qualifications," he said.

Asked on the request by the MIC for a separate quota for Indian students, he said the MIC had always felt that it was not given proper allocation in universities under the non-Bumiputera quota.

"So this year, under the Eighth Malaysia Plan and the country's Third Outline Perspective Plan (OPP3), we have made special allocation for the Indians from among the non-Bumiputera quota so they can have fair share," he said.

To another question on how the government intends to increase the economic equity of Indians in the country to 3 per cent from the current 1.5 per cent as announced in the OPP3, he said the mechanisms had not been decided yet.

On reasons why the Malaysian Chinese are not joining the government service, he said the community feels that doing business was a more lucrative occupation.

"If they join the government service, their prospects are limited...but it is limited for everyone else. But for the Chinese, they see more opportunities outside the government service...they prefer not to join the government service and even if they join, halfway through they resign in order to go into the private sector," he said.

He said increasing wages of government servants was not the answer to the problem.

"I was in the government before and I left the government to set up my own private practice because the pay was not good enough. But if the

government increases its pay for government servants, I can always increase my charge...I will always be ahead as a private doctor. You can't stop that," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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