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Gerakan-Politicking

GERAKAN SLAMS PARTIES FOR TOO MUCH POLITICKING

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 17 (Bernama) -- All political parties have been told to set aside and reduce internal politicking and concentrate on solving social economic problems faced by the multi-racial society, Gerakan President, Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said today.

As a result of intense politicking, he said the direction of the country's political scenario, in preparing the people to face economic challenges, has changed and if left unchecked could result in racial conflicts.

Worried over the income power of the rural, lower urban and the civil service, Dr Lim, said political parties should concentrate on these groups of society.

"If the current situation persists, racial conflicts could rear its ugly head. If social economic problems are not solved it could translate into racial sentiment," said Dr Lim after chairing the party's Central Working Committee meeting here.

He said Gerakan will recommend to the government to restructure economic policies and focus on marginalised people.

Dr Lim said the party will emphasise, in a memorandum to be submitted to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, ways to elevate the living standards of the lower strata of society in line with country's rapid pace of industrialisation and technological advancement.

He also said a large section of rural people and the less educated may not be able to follow changes taking place in the country although several development plans were being implemented under the Eight Malaysian Plan.

"The development plans by the government is not enough to raise the standard of the people from the rural sectors. We should do more," he said.

Dr Lim, who is also Primary Industries Minister, said urban workers should be given opportunities to acquire skills while salaries and terms of conditions of civil servants should be improved.

For instance, he said, smallholders with 0.8 and 1.2 hectares of land cannot earn enough through cocoa, rubber or oil palm cultivation.

Dr Lim said attention should be accorded to salaries and opportunities to upgrade skills among the lower level of the civil service.

"Middle level workers in the civil service can only afford to buy a low cost house in urban areas. These workers are not paid enough in comparison with their counterparts in the private sector," he added.

He said political parties, including those from the opposition, were playing too much politics and were not result-oriented in solving problems faced by those marginalised.

Dr Lim also said the party's central committee hopes to get Dr Mahathir's views at a dialogue session.

-- BERNAMA

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