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Mahathir-Pledge

GOVT WILL NOT BOW TO PRESSURE - DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 2 (Bernama) -- The Government will never bow to violence, street demonstrations, pressure and the dirty tactics of certain groups which are only championing their own interests, the Prime Minister said today.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reminded such groups that the present government was appointed through the democratic process via elections.

"This is our style and any feeling of dissatisfaction among any group should be brought up at the election and not in ways that breach the law and the country's constitution," he said.

The Prime Minister was pledging loyalty to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah on behalf of the government and people on the occasion of His Majesty's 75th birthday and investiture at Istana Negara here.

Dr Mahathir said in defending the country from any threat, the government would act firmly without any compromise even though certain groups including foreign governments would feel uneasy.

"The Government will not bow to pressure from any group and will take whatever action that is necessary and appropriate to defend the right of the majority of the people to live in peace and prosperity," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was the government's responsibility to ensure that the people continued to have the opportunity to pursue prosperity and enjoy wealth and happiness.

"Alhamdulillah, so far the government's action continues to have the support of the majority of the people who love peace," he said.

The Prime Minister said that what would befall the country once riots became the order of the day to topple the government, could be visualised clearly.

He said once a government was elected, the defeated party would riot and demonstrate to topple the elected government and when the government was toppled and replaced with another government, the supporters of the previous government would also riot to bring down the latest government.

"No government will survive and all the efforts to develop and bring progress to the country will come to a stop...the fate of the people will certainly not be taken care of...the economy will fall and the country will be in chaos," he said.

Despite being accused of being undemocratic and not respecting freedom of speech and rights of individuals, the government felt that its responsibility to safeguard the rights of the majority was more important than the individual's freedom to be irresponsible.

Dr Mahathir also said the government would continue to ensure there were close ties and unity among the races and also strive to unite the Malays who were divided by different political leanings.

On foreign relations, the Prime Minister said it was at a very inspiring level with Malaysia earning the respect of all for its firm policy in defending the rights of developing countries and opposing injustice and oppression of weak nations.

"This in some way has strengthened our influence among weak independent countries and also our ties with them," he said.

Leaders of various developing nations were continuing to visit Malaysia and had adopted it as a model nation and also recognised it as a foremost Islamic nation to the chagrin of certain groups and sections of the foreign

media which often criticised this country.

Dr Mahathir also said Malaysia's economic growth was expected at between five and six per cent this year in view of the world sluggish economy and the slowdown in the United States,

He said the government would continue to take measures to reduce the effects on the economy such as by promoting local investment, intensifying the use of local ports and airports and speeding up infrastructure development.

"The Government had also announced a RM3 billion package to stimulate the economy via infrastructure development such as schools, community colleges and housing," he said.

The Prime Minister on behalf of the government and people congratulated the King on his birthday and wished him good health and wellbeing.

-- BERNAMA

AT HS AAM