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Mahathir-tenure

LEADERS NEED MORE THAN TWO YEARS TO RUN COUNTRY, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 27 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed gladness for being Prime Minister for 20 years, saying that leaders needed to be given more than two years to run the country.

He said that changing prime ministers every two years might not let the country to see the result of the efforts undertaken by the leaders concerned.

"I found out that when I became Prime Minister, it took me two years merely to learn, another two years to try and work things out and nearly 10 years to see the result of my work.

"But if you keep on changing prime ministers every two years, and each prime minister wants to show his hands in the government and changes every policy made by his predecessor, you are not going to see anything at all.

"You are going to see turmoil continuously. So, while I agree with some countries should have president only for one term, I think one term is not enough. Somebody in this room might feel that way too," he said during the question and answer session at the 10th World Economic Development Congress here.

He had earlier delivered his keynote address at the congress entitled "Globalisation And Its Impact On Developing Economies: The Challenge, The Response".

Dr Mahathir was responding questions from the floor on his experiences as prime minister for two decades and whether he was now in position to influence his views to the world.

"Well I think that being 20 years in the office, you must have learned something.

"You know nowadays of course young people believe that they know everything already. A first year university student tells me how I should run this country," he said, drawing laughter from those present.

The Prime Minister said that after 20 years, he had have seen quite a lot, including the ups and downs of countries, go up with some, get totally destroyed and maybe did not make a comeback at all.

"I have seen all kind of politicians. I have seen various theories and theologies, and I have been able to evaluate some of them, not all, I may be right, I may be wrong.

"But in the case of Malaysia, as you know, when we were faced by the difficulties caused by the currency traders, we felt that we must not accept somebody else's solution especially as it is a standard solution applied to every country," he said.

Malaysia, he said had chosen to tighten its belt, and suffered a little during the recent economic crisis.

"We took a long time to device a way to get out of it, and I think most people will agree that Malaysia had managed to get out of this crisis on its own and with its own approach, and it has been quite successful.

"So 20 years is a good time to be prime minister. I don't think others will have that chance, but I'm glad I have that chance," he added.

--BERNAMA

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