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Mahathir-Opposition

OPPOSITION ONLY KNOW HOW TO SLANDER, SOW HATRED, SAYS DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 29 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today opposition party leaders in the country only know how to slander and sow hatred against leaders and the government.

The prime minister said if there were no misdeeds done by opposition parties, the country would be in peace and full attention could be focused on its development and to strike a balance in development among the various races.

"Not that we don't want opposition. They're important to criticise the government when it is over confident and does the wrong things.

"But the opposition in Malaysia does not criticise, it only hurls unfounded allegations and sows hatred against government leaders and parties," he said when opening the People's Progressive Party's (PPP) 48th General Assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Dr Mahathir said the opposition had tried to form an imitation front twice, with a first ending in failure and the second already cracking.

He said the people saw how PAS cheated DAP, Parti Keadilan Nasional (Keadilan) and Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM).

Dr Mahathir, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman and Umno President, said DAP suffered a big loss from its ties with PAS as it eroded the Chinese support for the party to the extent that its heavyweights, who had never lost in elections, were defeated in the 1999 general election.

"Because of that, the DAP tried to break away from PAS but it was a bit too late. Attempts to cooperate only with Keadilan will not clear DAP's name from being tainted by PAS," he said.

He said opposition parties should make a clear stand so that the people would know who they are.

Dr Mahathir said sarcastically: "I wish to congratulate Keadilan for claiming that it was not a Malay party. This will certainly benefit Keadilan as it will not be responsible in defending several provisions in the constitution that protected the rights of the Malays.

"Umno don't need the support of opportunists to defend the Malay rights," he said.

He said the country had established a unique inter-racial cooperation and power sharing system among BN component parties which should be retained regardless of whatever challenges faced.

Dr Mahathir said every BN component party should realise that they must be prepared to sacrifice some of their interests so that the common interests could be achieved.

"Nobody should give priority to self-interest to the extent of affecting unity in the coalition. If we lose, we must be prepared to retreat gracefully. Our disappointment is not as important as the party's success," he said.

Dr Mahathir said with the long mandate given to the then Alliance and the BN today, the people could see the results from the policies implemented with the per capita income now close to US\$4,000 as compared to US\$300 in 1957.

His speech also touched on globalisation, attempts to link Malaysia with the spread of the anthrax bacteria following the Sept 11 attacks on the United States and allegations of wastage of funds.

Dr Mahathir said only those who do not use their brain would still accuse the government of wasting money as the government's financial

position was sound.

"We can afford to increase development expenditure, pay bonus and increase salaries. It's impossible for us to do so if we are wasteful and finish the people's money without good reason," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said the 21st century was seeing more injustices and cruelties of the rich and powerful as compared to previously.

"It's pointless for us to cry foul as nobody will listen and help us. Since the Stone Age might is right and even today might is still right. If we want to save ourselves, we must make our own efforts," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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